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THE NEW YORKER

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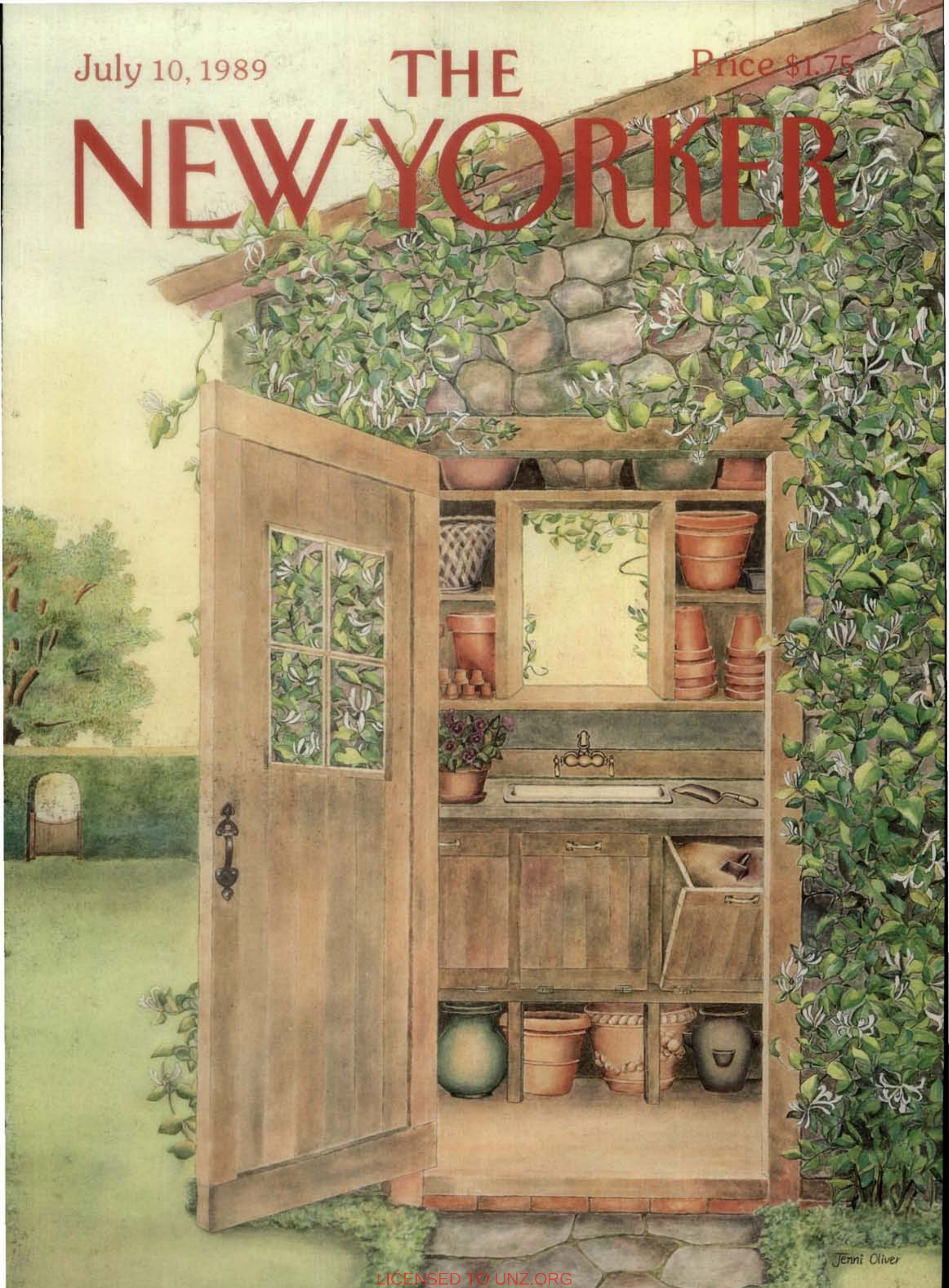

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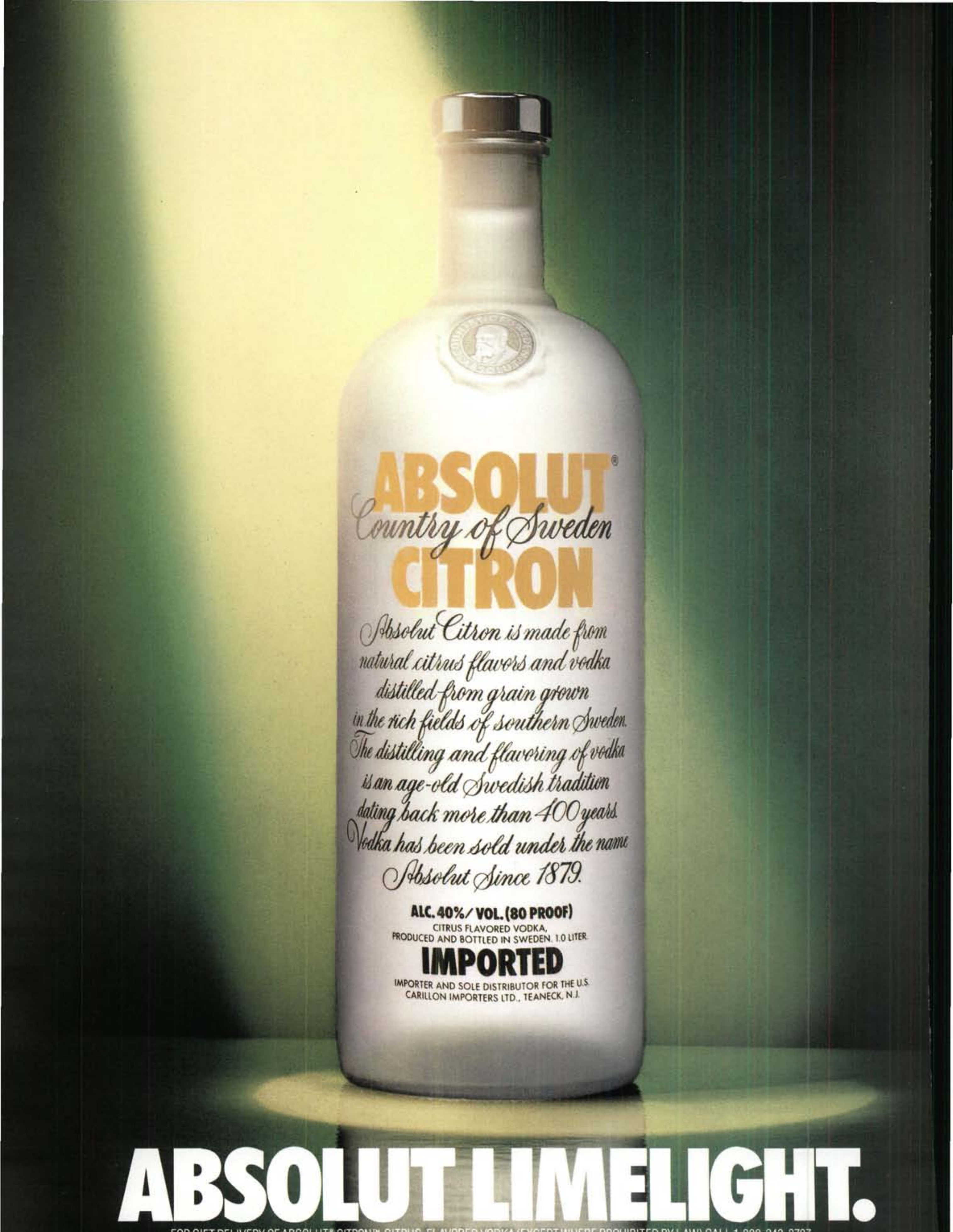
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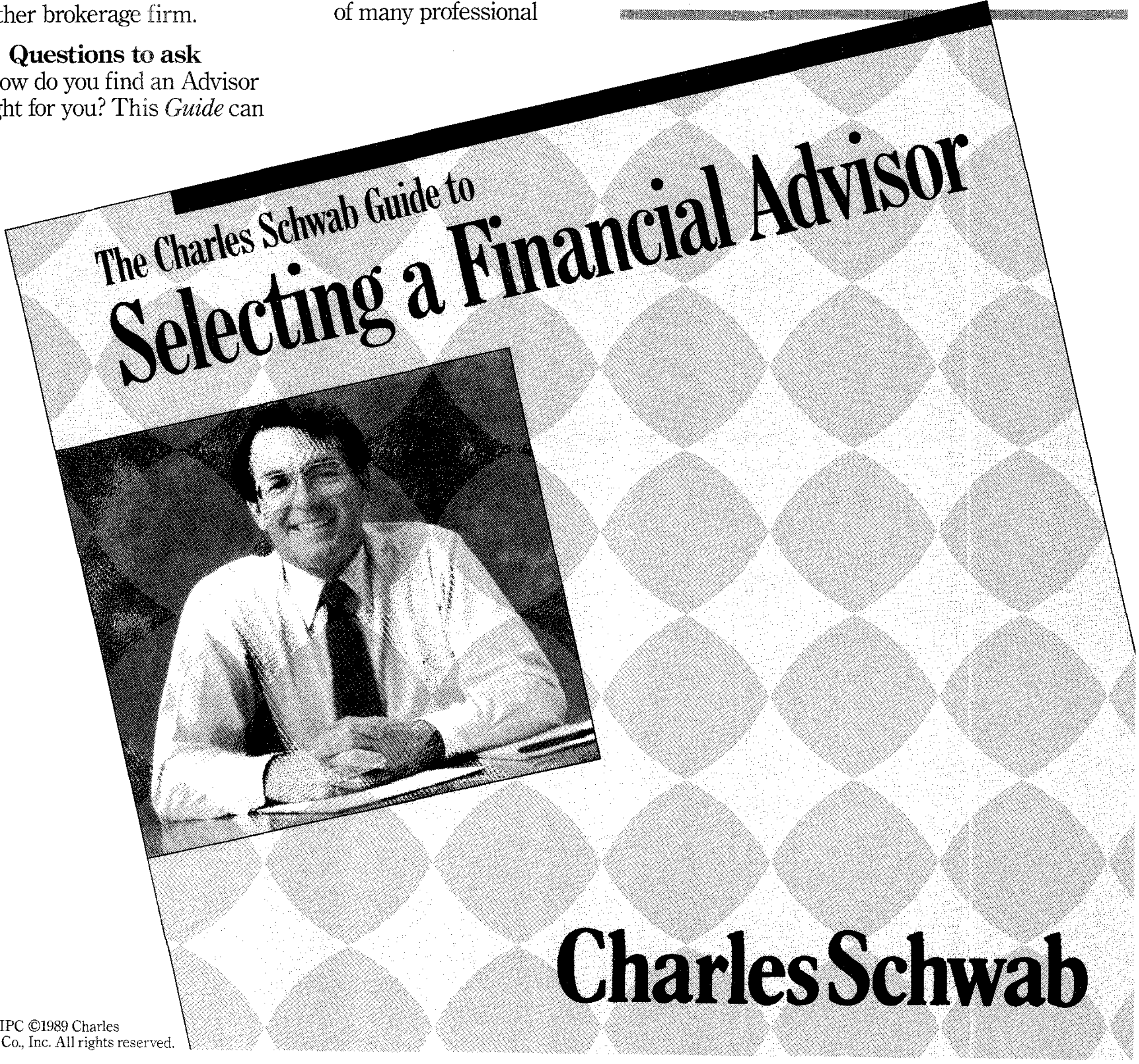

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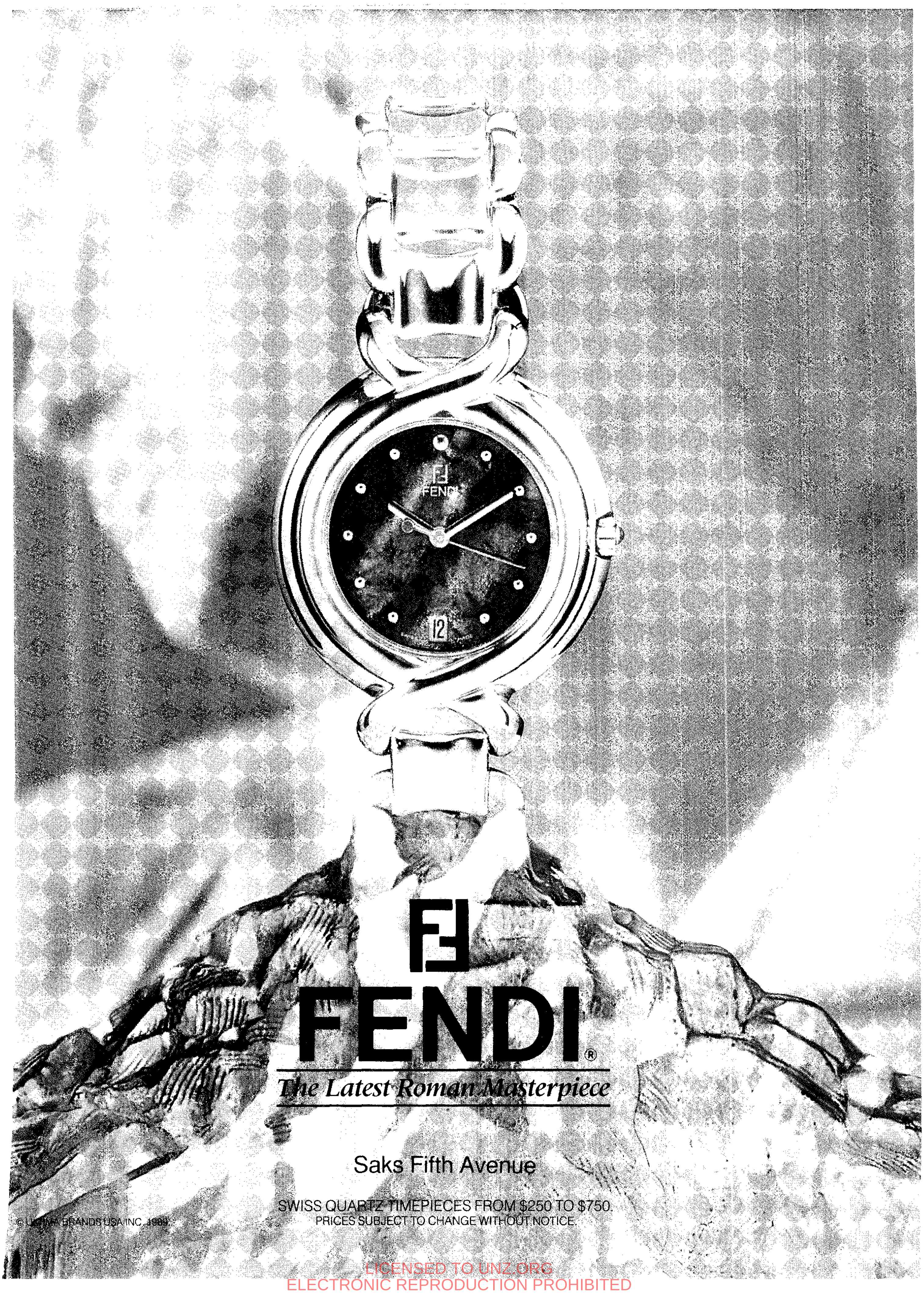

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

A THEATRE critic we know attended a school play not long ago and on being informed that one of the little girls she was watching had recently joined the company of "Les Misérables," decided to see if she could spot the professional. She took a guess and, when the play was over, sent an emissary to ask a man in a "Les Misérables" T-shirt whether she had correctly identified the smallest Viking (also the smallest colonist) as Broadway's newest Young Cosette. It turned out that she had.

After the show, the critic and her companion were forced to take refuge from a sudden cloudburst at a restaurant not far from the school, where, as luck would have it, they again encountered the extremely short Viking and the man in the T-shirt, along with a woman who looked suspiciously like the Viking's mother. The Viking turned out to be Daisy Eagan, of Park Slope, Brooklyn—a young lady of considerable charm and aplomb—who had made her professional début the previous Christmas playing Tiny Tim opposite her father (the man in the T-shirt) at BAM's Majestic Theatre. The whole group got to talking and ended up having dinner together.

The critic had been greatly impressed by Daisy's social poise, but couldn't help wondering what, if anything, a nine-year-old made of the idea of a theatre critic. She found out the following week, after she attended a matinée of "Les Misérables." As impressed by Daisy as an actress as she had been by Daisy as a person, she invited the girl and her mother to join her party (one of whom had more than eighty years on Daisy) for a meal at one of the overpriced restaurants in the theatre district. Service was slow and surly, and the food, when it finally came, was execrable. "I wish you were a restaurant critic," Daisy said.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedules and ticket information.)

A Hot Minute—A musical revue, conceived by Melanie Mintz, about backup singers and their aspirations toward the big time. With Vivian Cherry, Pattie Darcy, Jon Fiore, Annie Golden, and John-Martin Green. The first performance is July 6 at 8; the show will run one night a week, on Thursdays (at 8 and 11), through August. (Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St. 228-6300.)

Shimmer—A play written and performed by John O'Keefe. Previews begin July 10. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

Stary Theatre—Presenting **the dybbuk** and **hamlet iv** at "Summerfare" in Purchase. See listing under Arts Festivals, page 16.

Twelfth Night—The first of two plays in the New York Shakespeare Festival's free summer series in the Park. The large cast includes John Amos, Stephen Collins, Jeff Goldblum, Gregory Hines, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Michelle Pfeiffer, Fisher Stevens, and Charlaine Woodard. Directed by Harold Guskin. Previews July 4-5. Opens July 6 at 8, and will run through July 23. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	3	4	5	6	7	8
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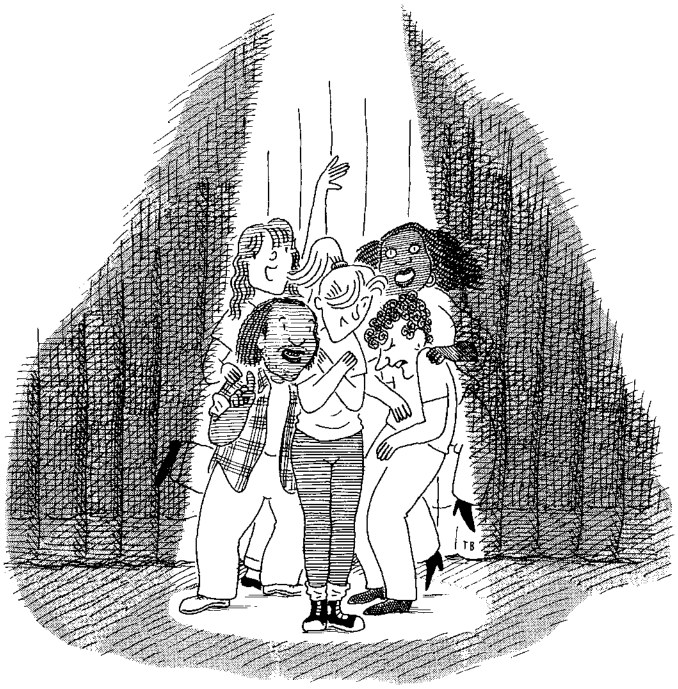
NEW THIS SEASON

Aristocrats—Brian Friel's portrait of the family of Judge O'Donnell, of Ballybeg Hall, in Donegal, is witty, ironic, and loving. It is faultlessly performed by Niall Buggy (an astonishing actor, who got his start at the Abbey Theatre), Peter Crombie, John Pankow, Kaiulani Lee, John Christopher James, and Margaret Colin, among others, under the direction of Robin Lefèvre. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/8/89.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-0102.)

Arms and the Man—Daniel Gerroll, as Bluntschli—a Swiss mercenary in the Servian Army and the repository of most of Shaw's wit—gives distinction to a satisfying production of this satire on war and other matters. He is ably supported by Roma Downey and Christopher Noth, among others, under Frank Hauser's direction. (6/19/89) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Closes July 9.)

Black and Blue—An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (2/6/89, under Dancing.) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

The Cocktail Hour—A dramatist returns home to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A. R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more engaging. Under Jack O'Brien's direction, Nancy Marchand gives a marvellous performance as the hero's mother, and Holland Taylor, Keene Curtis, and Richard Backus do well also. Starting July 11 Burt Edwards replaces Mr. Curtis. (11/7/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)



"A Hot Minute"

The Heidi Chronicles—Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon and transcend her generation all at the same time. With a superb cast, led by Joan Allen and Boyd Gaines. (12/26/88) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

I Could Go On Lip-Synching!—This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, managing not so much to raise lip-synching to an art as to transform aural montage into psychodrama. Certainly this is the strangest show in town. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556.)

Jerome Robbins' Broadway—A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. The evening is an orgy of family entertainment, a display of theatrical arts and crafts, and a canonization of Robbins and his era. Whether the fifties was your generation or your parents', this is the show for you. (3/13/89, under Dancing.) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Kathy and Mo Show: Parallel Lives—Comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. The show will take a brief vacation from July 11 through July 16. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

Largely New York—It would be a mistake to assume that Bill Irwin's dance-mime extravaganza is fundamentally boring because it lacks words; in fact, it has the best "book" on Broadway. The piece is partly a sendup of theatrical technology, partly a comment on the ills that beset a pluralistic society, and partly a debate about art. Irwin puts onstage all the conflicts, tensions, and antagonisms of modern city life and resolves them by means of an invented language. His solution is unrealistic—it obtains only in a theatre—but what makes the message so uplifting is that to understand it you have to learn a new idiom. (5/15/89) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

Laughing Matters—This comedy revue by the team of Wallem and Tolan is so consistently unfunny that it borders on the offensive. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 564-8038.)

Lend Me a Tenor—The setting of this farce by Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked to sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Under Jerry Zaks' direction, all the surprises up the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comic life. Philip Bosco, Victor Garber, Tovah Feldshuh, J. Smith-Cameron, Caroline Lagerfelt, Ron Holgate, Jane Connell, and Jeff Brooks make up the splendid cast. (3/13/89) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting George M. Cohan's **give my regards to broadway**, with some additional music and lyrics by Todd Ellison. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

Love Letters—Staged readings of A. R. Gurney's new two-character play. July 9, Jane Curtin and John Rubinstein, and, July 10, Judith Ivey and Victor Garber. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

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comedy about standup comedians, in all their panic and desperation, has the ring of authenticity, and jokes that invariably pay off. (One monologue, about a Greek restaurant, is a knockout.) The characters are an aging Catskills type; a young comedy team, still scrambling for a foothold; a jumpy writer; and a beef-brained manager. All the actors do well, under the lively direction of Larry Arrick. (5/29/89) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

Other People's Money—Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York stockbroker's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. Kevin Conway can seldom have been better or funnier than he is as Bronx-born Lawrence Garfinkle, and Janet Zarish plays his adversary (with a difference). They are ably supported by Scotty Bloch, James Murtaugh, and Arch Johnson. The performance as a whole is a credit to Gloria Muzio, who directed it. An import from the Hartford Stage Company. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

Rumors—This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has written. It is acted to perfection by Ron Leibman, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (11/28/88) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Shirley Valentine—Willy Russell's play about a Liverpool housewife who, feeling herself engulfed by drab domesticity, flies off to Greece, where she finds a temporary lover and lives happily ever after. With Patricia Kilgarriff in the title, and only, role. (Ellen Burstyn takes over starting July 17.) Directed by Simon Callow. (2/27/89) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Showing Off—As comedy revues go, this one—written by Douglas Bernstein and Denis Markell—isn't at all bad. The winning performances by Mr. Bernstein, Bebe Neuwirth, Mark Sawyer, and Veanne Cox often make the material seem better than it is, but ultimately they don't compensate for the over-all smugness of what is essentially lifestyle comedy. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)

A Tale of Two Cities—Everett Quinton's over-the-top one-man version of the Dickens novel has Miss Pross literally hanging from the ceiling. Unfortunately, his performance is more spirited than it is consistently funny. Best is the word "BLOOD" scrawled on the bathroom wall. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271. Closes July 14.)

Ubu—Larry Sloan and Doug Wright's adaptation of Alfred Jarry's "Ubu Roi," based on a translation of the play by Jacqueline de la Chaume. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes July 16.)

LONG RUNS

ANYTHING GOES: This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Leslie Uggams, Bill McCutcheon, and Gregg Edelman, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run recently turned twenty-nine. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1989:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Dorothy Kiara, David B. McDonald, and Jeff Lyons. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **INTO THE WOODS:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful and funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. The cast includes Nancy Dussault and Chip Zien. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363.) . . . **M. BUTTERFLY:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play, with John Rubinstein and B. D. Wong. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 246-0102.)

GETTING HOME

Taking the uptown No. 6 train home from Greenwich Village last Saturday night, we had a close encounter with an interplanetary being. Fortunately for us, he spoke English.

He entered the train at Astor Place. A tailored three-piece suit hid his extraterrestrial frame, and a saxophone dangled from his neck. However, the rouge on his cheeks and the coiled antennae on his head dimmed all hopes for a standard performance. "Greetings my Earth friends," he said. "My name is Jim, but you can call me Peaches. I am stuck on your planet and am simply trying to raise money for fuel to get my spaceship home. I will now play for your in-subway pleasure Mr. Ellington's 'Take the A Train,' as interpreted by my people." What came out sounded more like the actual A train. Some passengers covered their ears, while others unfamiliar with the song searched desperately for a beat to tap their feet to. He screeched to a stop, bowed (twice), pulled out an empty Doritos bag (apparently it's a universal snack), and asked for donations.

Few gave to the being's cause, and the prospect of his exit eased the tension among us. Suddenly, he stopped, and said, "Since I have not raised the necessary funds, and with the price of space fuel on the rise, I am left with only one alternative—to play again!" With these words, it became more urgent to us all that he return home to his planet.

DANCE

We learn the important lessons about speed and movement by watching dance in the theatre. But New York conditions the eye in a special way. It's not so much that everything moves faster here; drivers caught in rush-hour gridlock or straphangers on a crippled train can tell you about the refinements of adagio. It's that one is conscious of everything moving, in countless gradations, twenty-four hours a day. In the Brooklyn room where these words are being typed, the window opens on a flock of pigeons wheeling over a rooftop coop, and each pair of wings can be seen to flutter at its own rate within the larger thrust. Vapor gliding across the river tails a gigantic containership travelling north, and the ship lags behind a plane probably bent for LaGuardia. The ballerina in this picture—the figure that pulls the scene together and sums up what matters in it—is the Statue of Liberty. Her recently refurbished crown and torch are points of gold at this distance, her body a stick of shadow smaller than a snail. But the eye aligns perception with what the mind knows, as, from the top balcony of an opera house, one can peer down on the toy soloist, apparently nailed to her spot, and recognize a spinning star. On the Fourth, the Statue is often mantled in fireworks; still, it's not the galas that give her—or any dancer—life. It's the force of her gesture as recalled throughout the speeding year.

IN TOWN

Kirov Ballet—The company's first engagement here in twenty-five years. July 3 at 7, July 4 at 6, July 5 at 8, and July 6 at 7: "Le Corsaire." . . . ¶ July 7-8 at 8: "Giselle." . . . ¶ July 10-12 at 8: "Sleeping Beauty." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through July 22.)

L'Esquisse—A French modern-dance company in its New York début. (Florence Gould Hall, French Institute–Alliance Française, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. July 6-9 at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

New York City Ballet—A three-week engagement, which will run through July 22. July 4 at 8:15: "Apollo," "Mozart Serenade," and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ July 5 at 8:15: "Mozartiana," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ July 6 at 2: "Apollo," "Mozart Serenade," and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ July 6 at 8:15: "Mozartiana," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ July 7 at 8:15: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . ¶ July 8 at 2: "Mozartiana," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ July 8 and July 11-12 at 8:15: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." (Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Saratoga Springs. 1-518 587-3330.)

Frankfurt Ballet—See listing under Arts Festivals, page 16.

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—July 4-8: Ris et Danceries. . . . ¶ Starting July 11: The Miami City Ballet. (Becket, Mass. 1-413 243-0745. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8:30; and Saturdays at 2 and 8:30.)

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NIGHT LIFE

YOU can take us *anywhere.* Our friend Ellen, for instance, recently dragged us to heavy-metal night at the dance bar Downtown, where one of the bartenders had tattoos on her forearms and where a Hell's Angels chieftain requested our barstool and got it. A few weeks later, someone suggested we stop by Marie's Crisis, in Greenwich Village. Marie's is dingy but spirited: our waiter reprimanded us for trying to get a Rolling Rock in a gay canteen ("This isn't a damn yuppie bar, it's a sissy piano bar!"), and a patron who had been buzzing around our table grew bored with us and blurted, "What, are you people from Rhode Island or something?"

The most recent of our outings was to Shout!, a platter-spinning, " '50s and '60s Rock 'n' Roll" night spot near Times Square. From the street, there was plenty to recommend the club as somewhere we wouldn't be caught dead: that hokey *'n'* in "Rock 'n' Roll," a line of corporate greasers at the door, and loose talk about limbo contests and free buffets. Inside, we stood in the shade of a giant paper palm tree and took stock of the situation. Décor: a vintage Cadillac bursting through the back wall, a school of inflatable sharks, and a grainy video screen that—Hey, look! It's us!—transforms club patrons into instant archive footage. Entertainment: a stage full of Shout! dancers doing that fifties-ish choreography in which the hoofers wear high-tops and touch their hair a lot. Notable patrons: two paunchy guys in ties springing off the floor and belly-bucking in midair. We stayed. A couple of hours later, during the dreaded limbo contest, we got knocked out in the second round.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A big, soigné cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, in the heart of the fur-and-fashion-student district. Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine, **LA GRAN SCENA OPERA COMPANY** comes in to dis Verdi; Bruce Hopkins, a member of the above troupe, sings solo Tuesdays through Thursdays at eleven; and Little Jimmy Scott, a Lionel Hampton alumnus, takes the mike on Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

Bitter End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—The free passes to this club could pave most of Greenwich Village—and they often do. The Bitter End was all abuzz in the seventies, when it was a stopping point for the sort of singers whose records you can now order from television: Gordon Lightfoot, Melissa Manchester, Neil Sedaka. Aside from the rest rooms, which are what you'd expect to find during wartime, the place is pleasant enough. There's an Atari video game constantly aglow in the corner, a platinum record from Blood, Sweat, & Tears, and a doorman who, when you ask what time the band's coming on, will tell you anything you want to hear. A big band belonging to sax man **JOE ROCCISANO** will be here July 9.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A jazz club that would be a perfect stop on a bus tour (there's even a souvenir shop that sells Kodak). It's a good idea to make a reservation and show up well in advance. **LOU RAWLS,** the deep-voiced singer who hit pay dirt with his 1976 pop-soul biggie "You'll Never Find (Another Love Like Mine)," is here July 4-9. The **JIM HALL** (guitar) and **RON CARTER** (bass) duo kicks off on July 11, with pianist-singer-songwriter **DAVE FRISHBERG** in attendance. First set at nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. The walls and columns are basic black with some rainbow detailing here and there—the place looks a little like the outside of a van. If you end up without a seat, you can stand at the bar—finally, a club where they don't force you to drink—and mull over photographs from great shows you've missed. **SUZANNE VEGA** resurfaces briefly for shows July 7-8. Singer, guitarist, and fifties prom date **CHRIS ISAAK** brings his rockabilly pout here July 9-10. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar, tucked between a D'Agostino supermarket and a greengrocery. In 1969, when Bradley Cunningham and a partner bought it, it was called the Stirrup. Its light is distinctive, something between dim generic tavern light and refined haze; its patrons are famously gabby; its piano, which Paul Desmond bequeathed to Mr. Cunningham, has been played by many first-rate musicians, including Jimmy Rowles, Tommy Flanagan, and Dave McKenna. July 3-8, pianist **DON FRIEDMAN** leads a trio with Hungarian guitarist **ATTILA ZOLLER** and bassist **MIKE FORMANEK;** pianist **LEE ANN LEDGERWOOD** and bassist **RON MC CLURE** take over on July 9; and the piano-bass team of **KENNY WERNER** and **SANTI DEBRIANO** goes to work on July 10. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

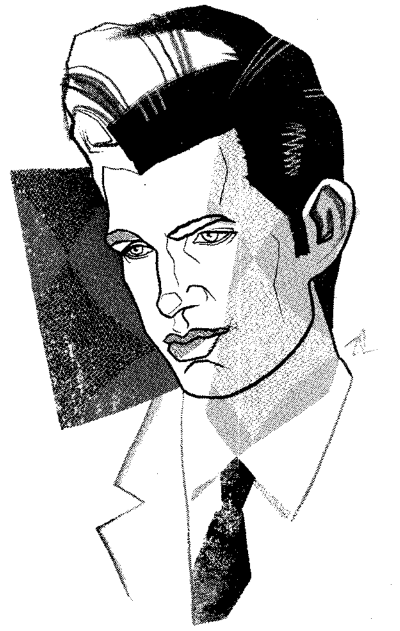
Cafe Gianluca, Broadway at 74th St. (877-9381)—In the lower depths of this Northern Italian restaurant and bar, you'll find waiters who come hustling down the stairs with pollo and prosciutto, memos on minimums and such preserved under glass on every tabletop, and ambassadors of international jazz on the bandstand. Brazilian guitarist Carlos Barbosa-Lima will be here July 5-8.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a small, well-upholstered room decorated with quaint Marcel Vertès murals (a nude at her easel, a leaping poodle), is a place where time pretty much stands still. Pianist Frank Owens settles in on July 5, with performances Mondays through Fridays at nine-thirty.

Continental Divide, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Hipsters, punks, posers, N.Y.U. students, the occasional skinhead—a typical East Village bar. It features a half-hearted prehistoric motif, including a woozy mural and assorted dinosaurs and pterodactyls; waitresses who sometimes have to climb over people to get to the tables; and a bartender who, the last time we were here, was sporting a T-shirt that read "Die, Yuppie Scum." The bands are mostly local, and range from the grungy to the downright chaotic. Irish folksinger Luka Bloom, an exception to the rule, claims July 4, followed by the hardcore bill of Cheetah Chrome and the Ghetto Dogs on July 5. Mondays belong to the Senders, and Thursdays to the Trash Cowboys, featuring ex-New York Dolls Sylvain Sylvain and Jerry Nolan. Shows Sundays at nine, Mondays and Tuesdays at ten, and Wednesdays and Thursdays at eleven. Dining.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or headroom in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make you forget all about it. Pianist-composer **STANLEY COWELL,** who was backing up Roland Kirk while the other fellows were going to frat parties, pops in on July 4 and back out on July 9. He's joined by bassist **BUSTER WILLIAMS,** drummer **VICTOR LEWIS,** and saxophonist **STEVE COLEMAN. BILLY COBHAM,** the explosive drummer and jazz-rock pioneer, starts up on July 11, with his quartet. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—A satisfying combination of Chinese food and homegrown music. Rubberneckers may see the moon wheeling by the greenhouse roof on its regular tour of romantic Manhattan. The pianists who pass through here are among Gotham's finest. **BILL MAYS** will be at the bench through July 9, with **HARVIE SWARTZ** on the doghouse. On July 10, Mr. Mays teams up with flutist Jamie Baum. Pianist **BARRY HARRIS** and his trio begin a six-night visit on July 11. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.



Chris Isaak

Indigo Blues, 221 W. 46th St. (221-0033)—A new jazz club, in the basement of the Hotel Edison. It's awash in blue neon, and has a fancy sound system and a shiny dance floor. Miles Davis, who had not played a note in a New York night club since 1975, christened this room awhile back. The musicians who have followed him are nothing to complain about, either: trumpeter **TERENCE BLANCHARD** (July 4-9); drummer **MAX ROACH** and his percussion ensemble M'Boom (July 11-16).

Jan Wallman's, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A mirror-walled burgundy room that gives one the not unpleasant sensation of sitting in a giant glass of red wine. The schedule: Richard Holbrook on July 5; the vocal group Black Tie on July 7; singer **BARBARA LEA** and pianist **WES MC AFEE** on July 8; Bonnie Lee Sanders on July 11; and Shawn Norton and Mr. McAfee on July 12. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—An Old New York kind of place, with dark-wood panelling, white tablecloths, and brass-figurine lamps. The musicians gather around the Steinway that sits in the dining room, next to a brass-railed partition, but chin music is often the dominant sound. July 4-8, **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** a fine stride and ragtime pianist who does a cheery rendition of "Them There Eyes" and who doesn't hide the fact that she loves her job, will perform with alto-sax player **MICHAEL HASHIM.** Pianist **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and bassist **CECIL MCBEE** will settle in for a few days on July 11. Sundays belong to singer-pianist-hot patootie **PHOEBE LÉGÈRE** and Mondays are the property of the a-cappella group Five Play. Music from nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—This upstairs music and performance space opened its doors in 1986 and quickly established itself as the headquarters of the downtown avant-garde music scene. (There wasn't much competition.) In the rear, there's a mini-bar stocked with herbal tea and imported beer; up front is a small stage and some indigenous art work on the walls. The Knitting Factory Festival continues, with pianist **ANDREW HILL'S** band July 4-5 and drummer **RALPH PETERSON'S** hard-bopping outfit July 6-7. Drummer **ANDREW CYRILLE** and pianist **MARILYN CRISPELL** work together on July 8 (the last night of the festival), along with bassist **REGGIE WORKMAN'S** ensemble. Music after nine. . . . ¶ The **LOUNGE LIZARDS,** a group of jazz-rock pluralists led by saxophonist and indie-film star John Lurie, who apparently would be hard pressed to squeeze all his fans into this room, are appearing a few steps away, at the Puck Building (295 Lafayette St.), on July 6.

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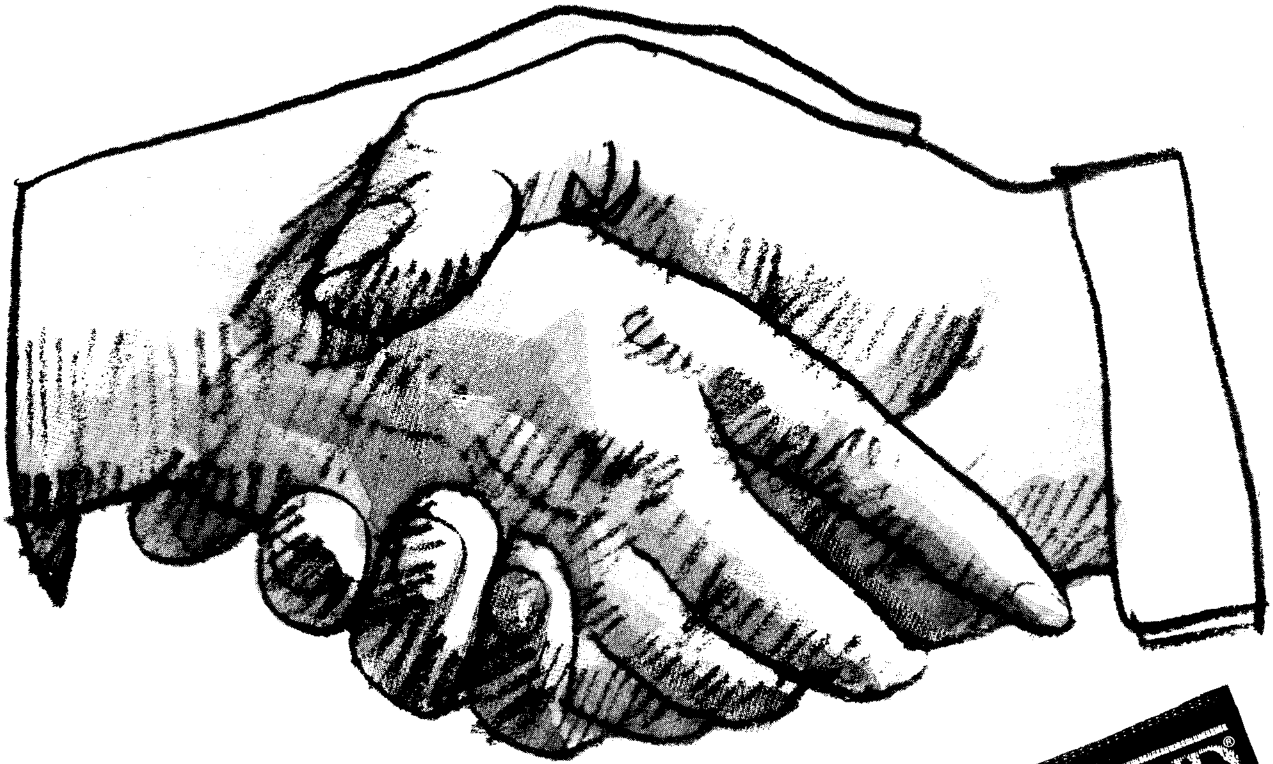

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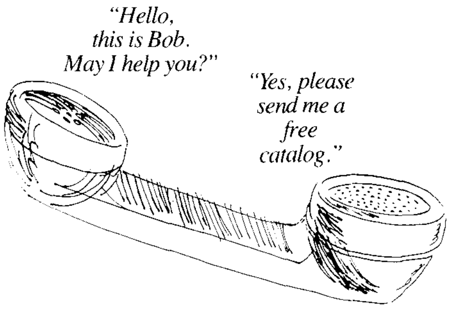
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—A small-pond club for big-fish bands. There's not much here to look at: Maxwell's is a back-room affair with a shag-rug stage and a baby grand someone apparently tried to papier-mâché. Still, the bookers know their college-radio playlists: Sonic Youth and Wire have been through recently, and R.E.M. and 10,000 Maniacs landed here before even *you* knew who they were. The **FEELIES,** those perennial Hoboken favorites, whose fervent guitar strumming and subliminal vocals can put one into a trance, take the stage July 6-8.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A midtown restaurant and jazz lair for the tasselled-loafers set. The dark, sombre bar (carved-wood lions, iron grillwork) looks like a place you'd find in London's financial district; the dining room—putting-green carpet, lime-green leather banquettes, panelled ceiling—has more of a country-club feel. **ANITA O'DAY,** a breezy, humorous jazz and scat singer, presides through July 8. She's concentrating mostly on swing standards, and is especially appealing on a few numbers ("Let Me Off Uptown," for example) that she used to sing with Gene Krupa's band in the forties. The Jim Cullum band begins a tribute to Louis Armstrong on July 11. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A new, glossy, multilevel maroon-and-silver cabaret, seating about ninety, and located on the north side of the sixty-fifth floor in what used to be the cocktail lounge. The performers, working in a shallow well in the center of the room, do unwitting battle with the bejewelled backdrop of Central Park, Lenox Avenue, the G. W. Bridge, and points north. Singer Julius La Rosa, who achieved instant celebrity when, in 1953, radio host Arthur Godfrey fired him on the air, starts a run here on July 4. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—July 4-9, bassist **RICHARD DAVIS & FRIENDS** deliver some rollicking swing in this Village temple of jazz (pressed-tin ceiling, grainy b. & w. photos of your favorite demigods, knee-to-knee seating). On July 11, trumpeter and flügelhornist **ART FARMER** and his quintet settle in for a spell. The electrified big band that the late Gil Evans brought here regularly—it shimmered a little and rumbled a lot, while Evans, a hands-off conductor, let his soloists blow at length—is now under the direction of his son, trumpeter Miles Evans, and is in action on Mondays. Shows from ten. Dining.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the gym-size downstairs room, which, with its black walls, black pillars, and black pipes and ducts, resembles a live-in Louise Nevelson sculpture, salsa bands pack them in on Mondays. **SID CAESAR,** who's nearing the end of his run here, descends the stairs Tuesdays, except July 4, through Saturdays, and Sunday, July 9. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the airy space known as the Terrace Bar, the piano-bass team of **JUNIOR MANCE** (the son of a boogie-woogie man, and a professional by the age of ten) and **MARTY RIVERA** will perform July 4-9.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. A quintet belonging to **LOUIS HAYES,** a hard-hitting drummer who doesn't let his soloists forget he's there, will be here July 4-9. Mondays are prime time for **MEL LEWIS'S** big band. Music from ten.

Zanzibar & Grill, 550 Third Ave., at 36th St. (779-0606)—Outside, the jungle that is New York throbs in its old heavy-handed way; inside, the ceiling fans turn slowly, the palm trees susurrate tropically, the jukebox plays Perez Prado and the Mills Brothers, and the customer is susceptible to fevered thoughts about going South, where he can do a little shelling and shuffleboarding. The musicians start up around nine. Saxophonist **CECIL PAYNE** and pianist **RICHARD WYANDS** will be here on July 5. July 10 belongs to guitarist **CLARENCE SHARPE** and the **ARI ROLAND** trio. Sax-and-flute man **LEW TABACKIN**—for years he's been the linchpin in big bands belonging to his wife, Toshiko Akiyoshi—will perform July 11-12. Dining.

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EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

To understand the logic of M.K.'s first Lypsinka Lookalike Contest, one should remember that most people who do drag are trying to look like some famous personality. Jim Bailey becomes Streisand or Peggy Lee, and Jimmie James is uncannily close to Marilyn Monroe. Lypsinka, however, resembles absolutely no one else. No matter that she may flash a stance like every M-G-M movie-musical queen who ever threw up her hands at the end of a showstopper, toss her head like Tallulah Bankhead, stalk a room better than Kay Thompson, wave as ingratiatingly as Suzy Parker, and occasionally sound as if Ann-Margret, Kaye Ballard, Lana Cantrell, Audrey Hepburn, Doris Day, Lawanda Page, Davis, Crawford, and the incomparable Dolores Gray had all entered her body and were trying to get out.

As for that face, Lypsinka's stalactitic cheekbones, Burton-Taylor-diamond-facetted eyes, and smashing smile, which used to radiate from the logo of Steeplechase Park, are as unique to her as a shattering bray is to Colleen Dewhurst.

What John Epperson does as Lypsinka goes beyond drag. Call it performance art, call it sleight of gland, call him Madam, but by culling the bounty from old record bins throughout the country he has fashioned a figure who so richly evokes the obscura of Hollywood and the bravado of Broadway that he has transformed himself into the veritable Goddess of Show Biz. Lypsinka performed at her own Lookalike Contest. As she segued from Ms. Gray's (Epperson's favorite, for her ability to combine "unctuousness with one of the theatre's great voices") frenetic rendition of "Once in a Lifetime" through her cool-baby, finger-popping turn on "Around the World (in Eighty Days)" to Ballard careening through "What's a Nice Girl Like Me Doing in a Dump Like This," ending with a cavalcade of curses from a recording called "The Sensuous Black Woman," the spectator's initial reflex—which is to compare Lypsinka to the other stars—was replaced by shouts of delight at watching stunt become style, and imitation become the sincerest form of talent.

Flattering though it must have been, the Lypsinka Lookalike Contest was destined to be as fruitless as it must have been finding a stand-in for the young Liz Taylor. Why did they bother? No one was even close.

Epperson's "I Could Go On Lip-Synching!," which has been on a break, returns to the Theatre Off Park on July 6th. As one of our theatre critics wrote, it's "kind of brilliant."

ART

The "Àpropos Aprons" show at the Met's Yukon-chilled Costume Institute is an occasion for cool conjecture. After perusing Mrs. Winston Guest's very pretty Mainbocher evening dress—made, of course, to order, with apronlike panels of elaborate Chinese embroidery that Mr. Winston Guest brought home from his travels—and studying the zestful tricolor apron that young Lucy G. Leavens wore to a mid-nineteenth-century Norwich, Connecticut, party as part of her "Goddess of Liberty" costume, visitors may ponder the significance in their own lives of other aprons: the bib, the pinafore, the tribal *cache-sexe*. For instance, fancy aprons—like today's designer work shirts and desert boots—were an early example of radical chic; they were worn by middle-class Europeans in the sixteenth century only after they were quite sure that they needn't wear plain ones. Pinafores, worn throughout the nineteenth century by adults and children alike, tell us about the Victorian subjugation of women. The little-girl look of a great Rudi Gernreich aproned mini-dress from 1967, and a funny tartan apron-as-kilt over bondage pants—designed more recently for men by Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren—are also the blithe residuals of repression. By so ingeniously concealing the lap, aprons, as they left the workrooms of the West, began to reveal other, more atavistic roots—those of *Ficus carica*, the common fig tree.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Goya and the Spirit of Enlightenment," a major exhibition of paintings and works on paper by this intense and elusive giant (1746-1828), proposes the artist as philosopher and political theorist. The installation is a little low on visual magic, a little long on wall labels, and of particular interest for two self-portraits: a young Goya working by the light of a candle-holding hat; an old, sick Goya attended by his physician. Through July 16. . . . ¶ Thirty-six of Lucas Samaras's works on paper from the museum's collection are on view in the Berggruen Klee Gallery of the Wallace wing (the Klee works that are usually there are at the Tate Gallery for the summer). Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ An exhibition comparing photographs of the sixties with photographs of the eighties, including works by Duane Michals, Cindy Sherman, and the Starn Twins. (Open Tuesdays, except July 4, through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45. On Tuesday, July 4, the museum will close at 4:15.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—Twenty-five sculptures and fifteen drawings by Christopher Wilmarth (1943-87). A compact and exceptionally discomfiting retrospective. The artist's green-glass structures from the late sixties and seventies are elegant but utterly mute. The late work—mostly bronze wall reliefs with ovoid etched-glass "heads"—offers about as despairing a vision of the self as you are likely to find. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ Helen Frankenthaler. Individually, many of these paintings have an undeniable presence: an intensity of color and a lyric delight. But, even when Frankenthaler's prolific career is reduced to just these forty paintings, their substance begins to evaporate, and the work ends up seeming best suited to a boardroom. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ "California Photography: Remaking Make-Believe." An exhibition of about forty-five

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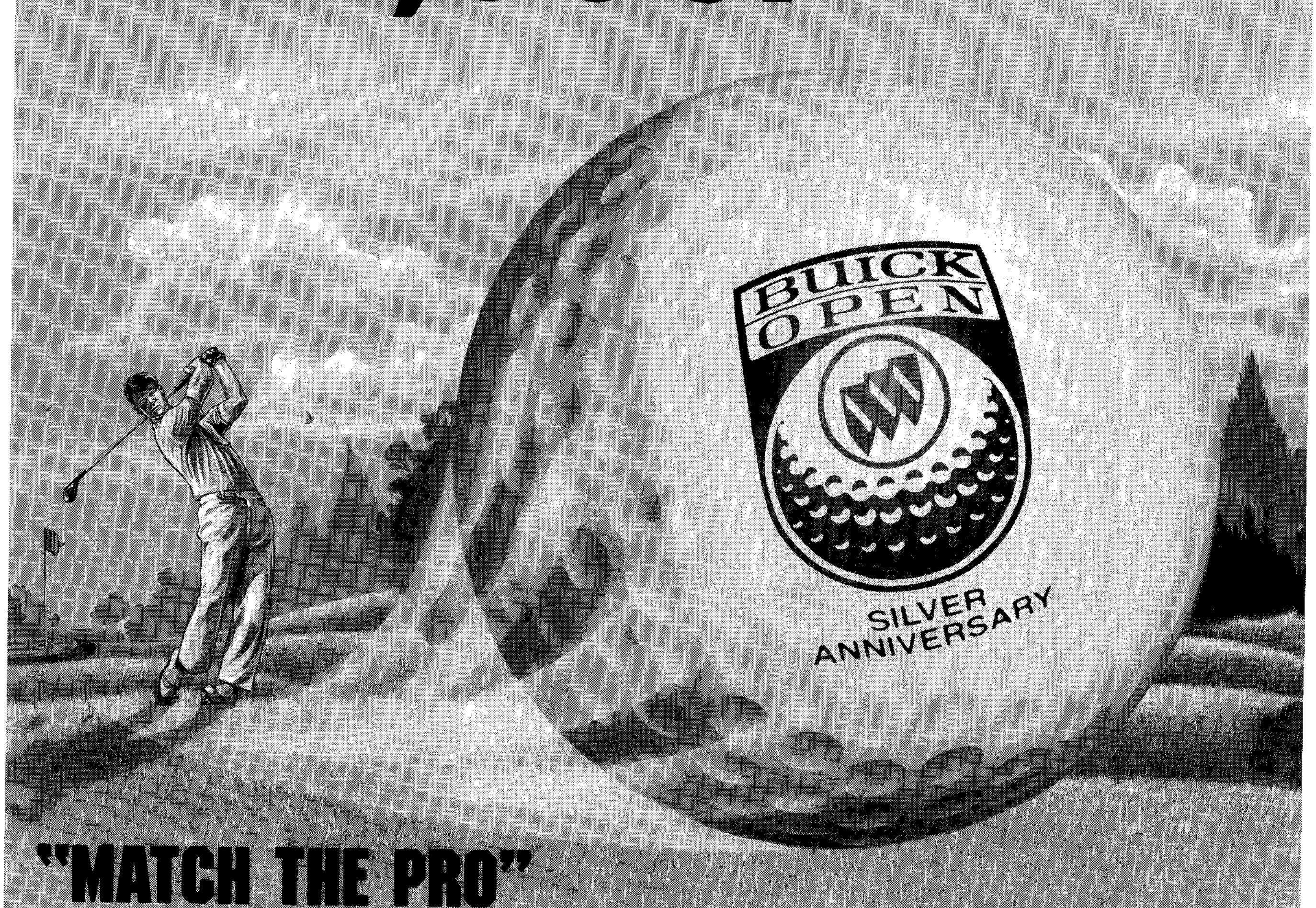

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works by John Baldessari, Nancy Barton, Jo Ann Callis, John Divola, Robert Heinecken, Larry Johnson, and Larry Sultan. All of the artists reside in California. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ "America Worked: The 1950s Photographs of Dan Weiner." Through July 11. . . . **NOTE:** The sculpture garden has reopened (after three months of renovations) with a slightly different lineup, including a monumental aluminum sculpture by Ronald Bladen. Free chamber-music concerts, performed by Juilliard students, are held here Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30; the entrance for the concerts is at 14 W. 54th St., and the gates open at 6. (The museum is open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

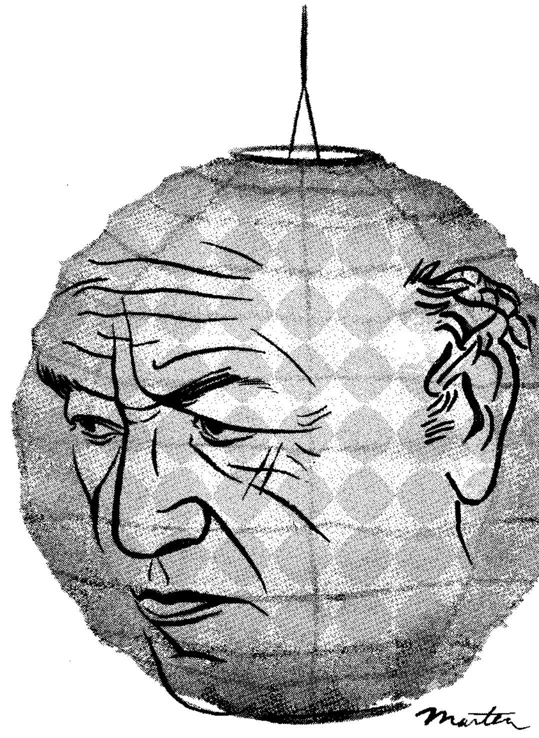
GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The Austrian artist and teacher Arnulf Rainer is a sympathetic and influential figure. Best known for his ongoing series of "Face Farces"—photographic self-portraits altered with paint—he exemplifies both a sixties-style liberated Expressionism and the sensuous flamboyance associated with the Viennese school. Seen in small doses, Rainer's work has considerable verve. But there's not enough variety or sweep in it to sustain this museum retrospective. Through July 9. . . . ¶ Hannelore Baron (1926-87). This show features modest abstract collages, from 1975 to 1984, composed of threadlike ink lines and frayed bits of discarded canvas and paper. They offer a glimpse of a child's world marked more by trauma and darkness—the artist was a Jew who came to New York from Germany in 1941—than by dreams. There are several fine boxed collages, which, thankfully, manage to escape the Cornell reference. Through July 9. (Open Tuesdays, except July 4, from 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The 1989 Biennial can be seen in its entirety through July 9, when the second-floor exhibits close; the lobby and fourth-floor exhibits continue through July 16. (Open Tuesdays, except July 4, from 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"Andrew Wyeth: The Helga Pictures." Through Sept. 18. . . . ¶ "Hispanic Art in the United States: Thirty Contemporary Painters & Sculptors." Like most sweeping surveys, this show is only partially successful. It points up the ways that Hispanic artists revere history and tradition—often at the expense of an independent voice—and how this reverence sometimes helps shape special visions. Such is the case with Manuel Neri, whose bronze and marble figures seem to glorify both ancient Egypt and modernism; and with Robert Graham, whose classical bronze figures are monumental and emblematic. There is much second-rate folk art on display, but the drawings of Martin Ramirez—he made all his art in an asylum—are rich in rewards. Through Sept. 4. . . . ¶ Concurrent with the Hispanic show is a forceful lobby installation by Alfredo Jaar, a Chilean artist living in New York. It consists of light boxes that look like black beams and are edged in photographic transparencies of United States civil-rights protesters, including picketers carrying signs that read "I *AM* A MAN" and a young black man with part of his face done up in white makeup. The artfully haphazard arrangement of beams argues effectively for anti-authoritarianism in both life and art. Through Sept. 4. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, 40 W. 53rd St.—A show of furniture by George Nakashima, a woodworker who favors an organic approach to tables, chairs, cabinets, and lamps. Through Aug. 20. (Open Tuesdays, except July 4, from 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

BRONX MUSEUM OF THE ARTS, 1040 Grand Concourse—Red Grooms: His work is about as close as art gets to real entertainment, and his graphic work—the subject of this exhibition—is no exception. Included are some delightful three-dimensional lithographs that resemble permanently opened pop-up books. Through Sept. 10. . . . ¶ Sculptor Mierle Laderman Ukeles is showing works made with crushed soda cans, pulped Christmas trees, and shredded Wella Balsam containers. Through Sept. 4. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)



Isamu Noguchi

A HARD PLACE

Two rock formations are the most prominent features of a small park on Broadway at 166th Street. The stones push up through the park's paved walkways and through the bottles, tin cans, and other refuse that cover the place like a threadbare blanket. The park is flanked on one end by the rotting remains of the Audubon Ballroom, on the other by a 1922 sculpture by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney commemorating neighborhood residents who died in the First World War. The sculpture depicts three soldiers, two of them badly wounded, helping each other to stumble across a battlefield.

These days, the benches around the stones are often occupied by homeless people. On a recent sunny day, the laughter coming from a group of them sharing a joke echoed the comradeship of Whitney's figures joined together in a strange land.

COOPER-HEWITT MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Two hundred years' worth of French design, in honor of the bicentennial of the French Revolution. Through July 16. (Open Tuesdays, except July 4, from 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"In the Shadow of Conflict: Israeli Art 1980-1989": The organizers attempted inventively to survey recent Israeli art with a pertinent political theme, but the site-specific protest art documented in the catalogue looks far more interesting than most of the very earnest paintings and sculptures on view. Joshua Neustein's paintings of segmented maps of the Middle East, however, display a restrained intelligence, and Moshe Gershuni shows a great hand in his violent expressionistic paintings on paper. Through Aug. 6. . . . ¶ At the time of the French Revolution, more than half of France's Jews lived in Alsace and Lorraine. The Alsatian folk art on display here was produced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; there are, for instance, carved Torah pointers (several are quite ornate), large mezuzahs, engraved pewter plates, a delicate Torah crown, and a birthing chair. Through Aug. 14. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—"Words of Blood, Images of Fire," another tribute to the French Revolution, includes Robespierre's holograph of a speech Saint-Just gave attacking Danton; a sketch (attributed to David) of Robespierre on the day of his execution; and letters, more speeches, and memoranda. Through Aug. 20. (Open Tuesdays, except July 4, through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

THE NEW MUSEUM, 583 Broadway—The second installment of a two-part retrospective of work by Nancy Spero, that most politicized of aesthetes. The artist's more recent style characteristically involves collages with passages of typescript (feminist treatises, literary quotes, Amnesty International bulletins) that seem to float among lyrical sequences of block-printed, archetypal female figures from many different periods and cultures, ranging from Greek goddesses on the warpath to bereft Vietnamese mothers. Through July 9. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—Botanical illustrations from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, among them Georg Ehret's colored engraving "Yucca Aloifolia," a couple of Redouté watercolors and prints of his work from "Les Roses" and "Les Liliacées," and watercolors by Lilian Snelling, Mary Grierson, and Pandora Sellars. Through Sept. 2. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open daily, except Sundays and July 4, from 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ The Berg Collection's new show, of a hundred first editions, letters, and manuscripts, singles out themes of love and death in English and American literature. Items such as John Keats' farewell letter to his love Fanny Brawne, E. E. Cummings' poem "Who's Most Afraid of Death?" (inscribed to his wife, Marion Morehouse), and Mark Twain's acknowledgment of sympathy expressed after the death of his youngest daughter are particularly compelling. Starts July 3. (Berg Collection Exhibition Room. Open daily, except Thursdays, Sundays, and Tuesday, July 4, from 10 to 6.)

ISAMU NOGUCHI GARDEN MUSEUM, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City—Noguchi, one of the twentieth century's singular talents, designed this oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of his sculptures. It contains a wide range of his work—from the early surrealistic biomorphic sculptures through several types of stone carvings—and documentation of his prodigious public art. The centerpiece of the museum is a peaceful, ivy-walled garden dotted with the artist's works. (Open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They will be closed Monday and Tuesday, July 3-4.)

LOIS LANE—Children, animals, romance, and ornament are both form and content in these pleasant-looking, beautifully produced, but insipid monoprints with collage. Also, two new paintings—semi-abstract configurations of silver swirls and smudgy areas, one including the image of a deer. Through July 14. (Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

CHRISTOPHER WILMARTH (1943-87)—This exhibition is a coda to the MOMA retrospective, with an emphasis on drawings rather than sculptures. The early-seventies paper pieces with folds and staples are especially good—sensuous and succinct. The later, figurative works are sometimes powerful but suggest an acrid emotionalism. Through July 28. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

ENTER FOR AFRICAN ART—"Wild Spirits Strong Medicine: African Art and the Wilderness." A provocative display of artifacts. It begins with pairs of objects which illustrate the contrasts between village life and wilderness, or bush, life. The village objects are refined and domesticated; the others are aggressive and exaggerated. Additional exhibits related to the wild include an extraordinary fifteen-foot snake mask. Through Aug. 20. (54 E. 68th St. Opens at noon on Sundays; closed Mondays.)

OUR ICELANDIC ARTISTS—Jón Axel Björnsson is an expressionistic painter, and his wife, Sóley Eiríksdóttir, makes odd, linear figure sculptures in black concrete. Kolbrún Björgófsdóttir, a ceramist, shows cones and pyramids with a brown-spotted glass, while her husband, Magnús Kjartansson, is represented by ambiguous work—simultaneously abstract and Pop—painted on paper. Through July 28. (American-Scandinavian Foundation, 127 E. 73rd St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

POELITICAL OBJECT"—Twenty years of vanguard Spanish art—*printed work, mostly—with a* neo-Dada attitude. Joan Brossa's visual poems are especially terse and fun—there is an "O," for instance, shaped like Alfred Hitchcock's profile. Through July 22. (Spanish Institute, 684 Park Ave., at 68th St. Open daily.)

ROUP SHOWS—At **CORDIER & EKSTROM**, 417 E. 75th St.: Most of these works, by several artists (including Romare Bearden and Isamu Noguchi) are small. and some involve collage techniques, as well as narratives that stop just short of surrealism. Through July 14. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **GAGOSIAN**, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.: Though the main *room here has only three pairs of exquisite* paintings, they manage to capture some of the central painterly concerns of the sixties in a fresh way. A Frank Stella copper pinstriped canvas and a Roy Lichtenstein Benday-dotted brushstroke contrast differing concepts of gesture and image-making. A multiple Jackie and a silver double Elvis display the tragic side of Andy Warhol's portraiture, which was played down by the recent Museum of Modern Art retrospective. A Cy Twombly and a Robert Ryman (from the eighties, but still appropriate to a discussion of sixties art) suggest not so much the end of painting, which this kind of work was *thought to suggest at the time, as a new* beginning. Through Sept. 1.

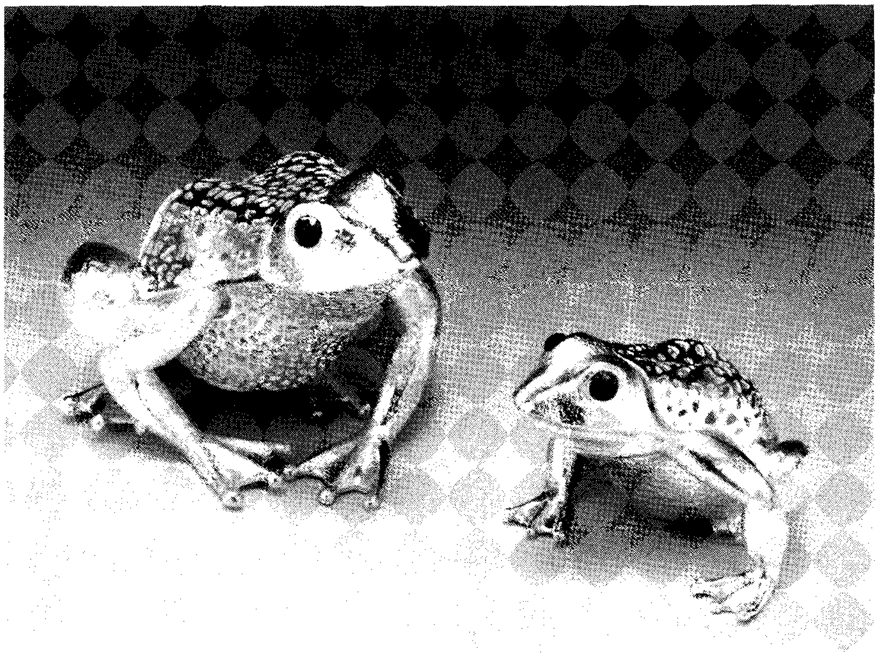
GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

EAN DUBUFFET (1901-85)—Paintings and works on paper from 1955 to 1962 that look like closeups of soil. With these sere and gritty surfaces, Dubuffet seems to anticipate the work of artists as disparate as Milton Resnick and Anselm Kiefer. Through July 8. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

RJÖ EDELMANN—Technically perfect and perfectly hideous trompe-l'oeil schlock: paintings of crumpled paper and the like in the form of novelty phone pads. Through July 14. (Heidenberg, 50 W. 57th St.)

UBLIC DOMAIN—There's a political edge to all the works in this odd exhibition of exemplary public-oriented art. Richard Artschwager is represented by a model for an ambitious public sculpture—a plaza, actually—which consists of a windowed monolith that can be viewed on one side from an armchair and on the other from three very tall straight-backed chairs; the grouping is as dramatic and rigid as Fascist architecture. In a more populist spirit, Dennis Adams displays the model of a bus shelter he constructed for Toronto; its illuminated panel depicts native North Americans protesting for land rights on the steps of the Peace Tower, in Ottawa. An eloquent defense of art as a catalyst for public exchange is to be found in Hans Haacke's photo-panels with text, which document a work he installed in a Graz square last year—the piece confronted Austrians with their collaboration with the Nazis—and the intense, opposing reactions to it, which included a firebombing. Through Aug. 31. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

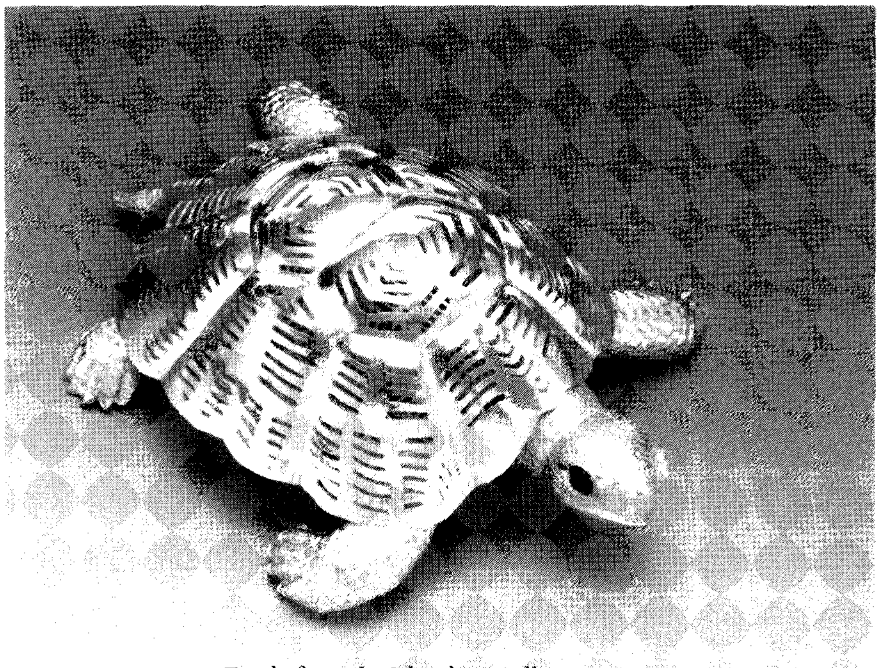
"ARTISTS' ARTISTS"—Recent drawings and monotypes by Joseph Goldyne and Joyce Treiman. Revered predecessors such as William Merritt Chase, Winslow Homer, and Gustave Caillebotte are given their due by these two literal and unleavened realists. Caveat emp-



Frogs from the Silverlace Collection.
Left $100, Right $70.

Pavillon
Christofle

MACY'S FLORIDA, ATLANTA, NEW ORLEANS • BULLOCK'S



Turtle from the Silverlace Collection, $80.

Pavillon
Christofle

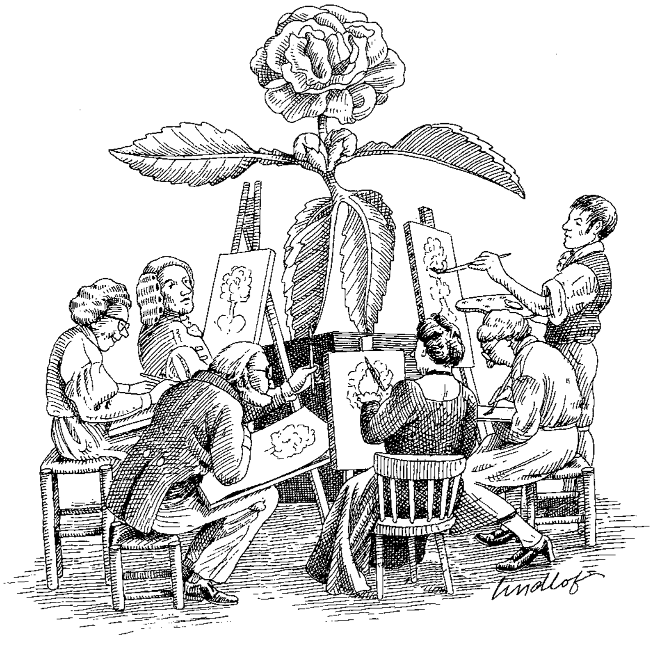
GARFINCKEL'S • MARSHALL FIELD'S

tor: Treiman, with a self-portrait, has put herself into this pantheon. Through July 21. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **DE NAGY,** 41 W. 57th St.: Landscapes by eleven painters and a sculptor. The over-all atmosphere is subdued and relentlessly poetic. It's also foreboding in the case of Nachume Miller and John Bowman, and elegiac and mannered in the case of the suddenly very popular Chris Pfister (seen recently in a huge show at Bess Cutler). Through July 27. . . . **MARIAN GOODMAN,** 24 W. 57th St.: Sculpture with conceptual tendencies, from 1968 to the present, by such artists as Giovanni Anselmo, Richard Artschwager, Lothar Baumgarten, Luciana Fabro, Rebecca Horn, Claes Oldenburg, Giulio Paolini, Giuseppe Penone, and Lawrence Weiner. Artschwager's filing cabinet, with its motif of ornaments suggesting winged messengers at different stages of alertness and exhaustion, may elicit the quickest smile in this altogether witty and elegant show. Through July 28. . . . **MARLBOROUGH,** 40 W. 57th St.: A big sampler of mostly gallery artists, many represented by work with a summer theme. Of these, Larry Rivers' two portraits—of a jazz musician naked in his hot hotel room, and of a woman in shorts lolling languorously on a porch—make the best, sultriest point. Through Sept. 16. . . . **GALERIE ST. ETIENNE,** 24 W. 57th St.: This show honors Otto Kallir, the founder of the Galerie St. Etienne, as much for his pioneering exhibitions of the Austrian Expressionists as for his fascination with the documentation of this century's profound events. In addition to a gorgeous watercolor of a girl by Emil Nolde, an intense self-portrait by the little-known Richard Gerstl (whom Kallir discovered after the artist committed suicide at age twenty-five), and some fascinating paintings by the composer Arnold Schoenberg, we see Charles Lindbergh's application for an airplane license, Robert E. Peary's telegram confirming the "discovery" of the North Pole, and written recollections of Adolf Hitler, the artist, by Reinhold Hanisch. Hanisch sold Hitler's watercolors in the teens, and in the thirties was Kallir's restorer, prior to the dealer's flight from his native Austria. Through Sept. 8. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **SIEGEL,** 24 W. 57th St.: A full yet dreary exhibition of mostly academic landscape paintings. Virtually every vista except oceans white with foam is on view; only Earl Staley depicts a place we might want to experience. If this show were used as a case study in the nature-versus-culture debate, there is no doubt which viewpoint would win. Through July 28. (Closed Mondays.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Ed Albers / Alexis Rockman—Recent paintings and drawings by two younger *fleuristes du mal.* Albers' work has a dry, etched-in look, while Rockman's is sleekly wet-on-wet and possessed of a naughtier, more finely honed sense of humor than he has revealed before. Through July 14. (Fawbush, 568 Broadway.)



Botanical Illustration at the New York Public Library

James O. Clark / John Eberson—These powerful sculptures are assembled from machinery parts and fluorescent or neon lights. The pieces are strong and vulnerable, eerie and beautiful, and come from a mature, rarely heard voice. Through July 14. / In the twenties, Eberson designed theatres that were decorated as Moorish fantasies, or had qualities found in Persian or Italian architecture; here are technical drawings and photographs of several of them. Through July 28. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

Leo Copers—A show of found, and altered, objects by a versatile Belgian conceptualist, including a sidewise chandelier, a ghostly cocktail table, and other skewed signs of a not so discreet bourgeoisie. Through July 21. (Shainman, 560 Broadway.)

Yury Dyshlenko—Big recent paintings in a hyper-realistic but non-static street-photographer style, which seems to build from earlier, officially approved Soviet realist genres while avoiding any sense of monumentalism. These are interesting, anxious pictures. Through July 28. (Kind, 136 Greene St. Closed Mondays.)

Inigo Jones (1573-1652)—An impeccable scholarly display of lovely ink drawings by the great Palladio-influenced Elizabethan architect. Through July 22. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8; closed Mondays.)

Laurie Kaplowitz—Brownish paintings and collage elements and shadowy, scratched-in figures that sometimes suggest an Egyptian motif. Through July 12. (Haller, 415 West Broadway.)

Roy Lichtenstein—This invigorating exhibition brings together all of the Pop master's bronzes (1976-89), an underappreciated aspect of his oeuvre. Such classic Lichtenstein images as mirrors, brushstrokes, and drinking glasses are flat pictorial reliefs that have to do more with Cubist painting than with sculpture in the round. The bronzes have all the charm and wit of the artist's best paintings and are marvels of abstract composition. Through July 29. (65 Thompson Street Gallery. Open Saturdays.)

Paul Ludick—The artist has labelled the rear of each of these thirty-one lyre-back chairs with the name of a place associated with one of his friends. On each seat is a pile of rocks sent by the friend, and each "still-life" is draped in a silky turquoise veil. It sounds like an evocative and mysterious transcultural installation, but it looks tacky. Through July 15. (Steinbaum, 132 Greene St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

Joni Mabe—The walls of this obsessive installation are covered with country 45s, old license plates, and ticky-tacky memorabilia. Altars made of rusted bed frames and edged in frosted half-tires occupy most of the floor. Books documenting the artist's obsession with Elvis—one includes a snapshot of her wearing a sleeveless dress that is smothered in Elvis buttons—are more interesting than most of the standard faux-naïf fare here; two exceptions are the actual tiara Edith Massey wore in "Pink Flamingos" and a calendar from the Shakir Barber Shop. Through July 14. (O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway. Opens at noon Tuesdays through Fridays.)

Aleksander Roszkowski—Paintings by a young Polish artist of headless, bloody bodies hanging like sides of beef—sincere, standard Expressionism. Through July 6. (Zarre, 379 West Broadway.)

Sue Williams—Social history, art history, and American history are the targets of this artist's quirky, deft lampoons. Technically, she is a more accomplished draftsman and collagist than painter, but all in all there is every reason to look forward to what she does next. Through July 8. (Loughelton, 67 Prince St.)

Group Shows—At the **ALA,** 560 Broadway: The six artists here have worked in various materials, but in these sculptures and paintings fake fur is king. Pino Pascali, an Arte Povera artist who died in 1968, covered large wood zigzag panels with it to form a very phallic-looking worm that is over thirty feet long. Eric Bainbridge used it to swathe a huge animal sculpture, "The Twentieth Century," that has a duck's body, a bunny's tail, a mechanical nut for a head, and suction cups for feet. It is part Trojan horse, part Tower of Babel, and part Frankenstein's monster. Through July 28. . . . **GORNEY,** 100 Greene St.: A certain historicism prevails here: straightforward, moody photographs by James Welling of some wonderful buildings by the American architect H. H. Richardson; Justen Ladda's perspectival trick piece, involving two male figures, a chair, and what is meant to suggest a mirror; a black-and-white painting by Peter Nagy that's a kind of graphic version of an Intimist interior; a beautiful small fountain by R. M. Fischer cast in industrial metals and made up of shapes that evoke the fixtures of days gone by; and the pièce de résistance, Joel Otterson's "Coffeetable Museum," a friendly, semi-functional beverage caddie constructed with copper pipes, a big slab of natural-burled wood, and dozens of cups, saucers, teapots, and coffee makers representing a wide variety of brewing techniques, nationalities, and period styles—a veritable table of babble for the civilized sipper. Through July 28. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **LENNON, WEINBERG,** 580 Broadway: Works on paper by Joan Mitchell, Willem de Kooning, John Chamberlain, Brice Marden, Malcolm Morley, Louise Fishman, Donald Lipski, Chuck Connelly, Catherine Murphy, and H. C. Westermann. Lipski—always peculiar—and the weird, wondrous Westermann deliver interesting quirks. Through Aug. 11. . . . **SONNABEND,** 420 West Broadway: New works by several gallery artists that suggest some painterly developments: Meyer Vaisman's reliefs (these have an antique-coin motif) are now quite colorful; Ashley Bickerton is letting his hand show on at least one surface per piece; the erstwhile minimalist Mel Bochner has transformed his linear configurations into gestural paintings; Terry Winters has loosened up. From another, drier domain: Gilbert & George are now safely ensconced in their position as portraitists par excellence of a new, homoerotic, heterogeneous Britain; and Haim Steinbach's *tableau mort,* a Barcelona chaise longue inside a close-fitting walnut-veneer chamber—a place for the patient, no room for the shrink—must be the last word in post-Freudianism; it's hilarious. Through July 15.

OTHER GALLERIES

"Rotten to the Core"—The title for a show of original drawings—by Robert Crumb, Spain Rodriguez, Rick Griffin, and others—for the latest issue of the comic book *ZAP.* Through Aug. 6. (Psychedelic Solution Gallery, 33 W. 8th St. Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 8.)

The Anchorage—Each summer, Creative Time offers artists the opportunity to create large-scale installation works underneath the Brooklyn Bridge, in a monumental brick space that feels medieval and has a dramatic barrel-vaulted ceiling. Scientific fare is much in evidence here (as everywhere else) this year. Under other conditions these works might wear thin, but here they seem appropriate and entertaining: a plant-filled mini-Pantheon made of abandoned refrigerators, air-conditioners, and plastic (by Bob Bingham); a curtain with water cascading down it and covered with algae (by David Nyzio); and low-hanging electric lamps that pulse and sway back and forth in various rhythms (by Fred Tomaselli). There are also several sound environments, including a corridor of clopping horses by Vida and a delightful makeshift orchestra by Yoshi Wada and Terry Fox. The most refreshing and full-bodied work is at the entrance and is not part of the show: a three-panel poster by Gran Fury—intended for New York City buses—of kissing couples that reads "KISSING DOESN'T KILL: GREED AND INDIFFERENCE DO." Through Aug. 13. (Cadman Plaza West at Old Fulton St., Brooklyn. Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

The Center Show—Site-specific installations (of paintings, photographs, and sculptures) commissioned by the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the riots at the Stonewall Inn, in Greenwich Village. Among the many artists involved are Keith Haring, Jane Dickson, Nancy Spero, Martin Wong, and Rhonda Zwillinger. Through Dec. 30. (208 W. 13th St. Daily, 9 A.M. to 11 P.M.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

WHOEVER said that a picture is worth a thousand words didn't know much about art. Some pictures are worth many more words than that, and with others a few words will suffice. Besides, the cliché leaves out the other side of the story—that words are also a subject worthy of pictures. The work of Nancy Hellebrand, who has a new show at Pace-MacGill Gallery, is just one example of visual artists' ongoing interest in language. Often in photography, as in the instance of Aaron Siskind's fifties shots of worn walls with graffiti, the writing has been found in public places. Hellebrand's photographs are different. They have an under-the-microscope quality. They're of handwriting, too, but they isolate and blow up their subject as though it were a specimen to be examined. Some of the writing is legible, some is not. Background textures make each image seem like it has been drawn on handmade paper, thus reinforcing the presence of the hand. In this age of computers, we wonder if Hellebrand's works—like Siskind's photographs, which preserve what somebody once felt the need to scribble on a wall—will take on an extra resonance in the future. Perhaps people will look at them and say, "They wrote with their hands! How barbaric!"

Harry Callahan / Barbara Morgan—Selections of color shots from 1978 to 1987 are arranged with some of Callahan's earlier, black-and-white photographs. The exhibition brings out this accomplished photographer's vision, which is so centered that he can afford to experiment. The result is a body of work that's never static, but that also has a consistent core. / This collection of prints, drawings, watercolors, and photographs shows Morgan's unswerving commitment to the idea of modern art as a vehicle for discovery. There are derivative pieces and there are powerful original works. None of them are flat. Through July 16. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, except July 4, from noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Stephen Shore—Rich color and crisp detail is what comes to mind when we think about Shore's work, and these landscapes taken in Scotland and Texas are no exception. They certainly have a virtuoso technique, but they feel a bit too obedient to what is expected of a serious photographer at present. Through Aug. 30. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

Dan Weiner (1919-59)—Counting the number of people smoking cigarettes has become a new way to date photographs. In Weiner's pictures of the fifties there's no "no smoking" rule stopping anyone, but almost every other kind of pressure is shown to be at work in "America Worked." These candid photographs reveal faith not in God but in goods, and there are also brilliant exposés of office dynamics. Many of these images were taken on assignment for *Fortune* magazine; here, in a new context, they provide a retrospective view of the era they were documenting—they're like an ethnological portrait of a tribe under a spell. Through July 11. (Museum of Modern Art.)

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MUSIC

TWO well-known directors are about to offer their interpretations of Mozart's "Don Giovanni." Harold Prince's work has been seen regularly in this town for decades, but not previously in the field of mainstream opera. Peter Sellars' has been much more written about than seen here; indeed, he has not yet staged any opera at all in Manhattan itself, but many local operagoers have made the short trip to the PepsiCo Summerfare in summers past to see his versions of Handel and Mozart. That festival, in its final year, is bringing back all three of his Mozart productions for several performances, with "Don Giovanni" leading off on July 8th.

Mr. Sellars charms and stimulates many, upsets and offends many others. It may be that there are also those whom he bores, but this response is little in evidence. His "Don Giovanni" is transferred from Seville to a Spanish Harlem replete with drugs and violence. When it was first seen, Don Giovanni's character (portrayed as a burned-out, nearly affectless addict) was played by a white singer and his servant Leporello by a black, and we wondered whether racial categories were being used to substitute for the class distinctions that are played upon in the Mozart version. But apparently not: this time, master and man are played by two brothers—identical twins, in fact—named Herbert and Eugene Perry.

Mr. Prince's production, which will open the New York City Opera season July 6th and reappear at intervals thereafter, is said to be a more traditional interpretation, with a Don Juan still full of youthful zest and self-indulgence (and still living in Spain). Prince's cast includes several City Opera regulars, led by John Cheek as the Don and Erie Mills as Zerlina. Sergiu Comissiona, who in his brief tenure as the company's music director was congratulated for improving orchestral standards, will conduct.

The Grateful Dead

IN TOWN

New York City Opera—Opening performances of the season, which runs through Nov. 19. **DON GIOVANNI,** a new production, with Elizabeth Holleque, Frances Ginsberg, Erie Mills, and John Cheek; conducted by Sergiu Comissiona. (July 6 and July 11 at 8.) . . . **IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA,** with Jane Bunnell, David Eisler, and Thomas Woodman; Sergiu Comissiona. (July 7 and July 12 at 8.) . . . **RIGOLETTO,** with Maureen O'Flynn, Susanne Marsee, Pablo Elvira, and Paul Hartfield; Scott Bergeson. (July 8 at 2.) . . . **THE MERRY WIDOW,** with Michele McBride, Ruth Golden, Richard Muenz, and Paul Austin Kelly; Imre Pallo. (July 8 at 8.) . . . **MADAME BUTTERFLY,** with Catherine Lamy, Cynthia Rose, John Absalom, and Kenneth Shaw; Imre Pallo. (July 9 at 1.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Mostly Mozart Festival—Opening concerts of the series, which will run through Aug. 26. July 11-12 at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducting the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, with Itzhak Perlman, violin. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424.)

OUT OF TOWN

Metropolitan Opera, Concert Productions—Final concerts of the series—**WATERLOO VILLAGE,** Stanhope, N.J.: July 5 at 8 (rain date, July 6 at 8), "Il Trovatore," with Susan Dunn, Stefania Toczyska, Lando Bartolini, Sherrill Milnes, and Paul Plishka; conducted by Thomas Fulton. . . . **RUTGERS UNIVERSITY,** New Brunswick, N.J.: July 7 at 8 (rain date, July 9 at 8), "Lucia di Lammermoor," with Ruth Ann Swenson, Alfredo Kraus, Pablo Elvira, and Harry Dworchak; Edoardo Müller. . . . **COOPER RIVER PARK,** Pennsauken, N.J.: July 8 at 8 (rain date, July 9 at 8), "Il Trovatore," with Susan Dunn, Stefania Toczyska, Lando Bartolini, Sherrill Milnes, and Paul Plishka; Thomas Fulton.

Caramoor Music Festival—July 7 at 9: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, with Richard Goode, piano, playing quintets by Mozart, Beethoven, and Franck. . . . ¶ July 8 at 8:30: John Nelson conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's in an all-Mozart program, with Mr. Goode, piano, and Stewart Rose, horn. . . . ¶ July 9 at 5:30: Pianists Misha and Cipa Dichter in a program that includes works by Brahms and Rachmaninoff. (Katonah, N.Y. Through Aug. 20. Trains that leave Grand Central on Saturdays at 2:48 and 5:48, and on Sundays at 3:48, are met at Katonah by buses for Caramoor. For information about tickets and trains, call 1-914 232-5035.)

Waterloo Festival Orchestra—This week's program includes Mahler's "Das Lied von der Erde" and is conducted by Gerard Schwarz. With Karen Brunssen, mezzo-soprano, and Vinson Cole, tenor. (Waterloo Village, Stanhope, N.J. 1-201 347-4700. July 8 at 8:30.)

Tanglewood—July 6 at 8:30: The King's Singers performing a program called "Music from Four Centuries." . . . ¶ July 7 at 9: Seiji Ozawa conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra in a program of Copland, Saint-Saëns, and Beethoven. With André Watts, piano. . . . ¶ July 8 at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa conducting the orchestra in Mahler's Ninth Symphony. . . . ¶ July 9 at 2:30: Roger Norrington conducting the orchestra, with Emanuel Ax, piano, in an all-Mozart program. (Lenox, Mass. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Aretha Franklin—The Queen of Soul (and cancellations) is booked for three nights here, and the faithful pray that she'll appear, singing her very best R. & B., gospel, and pop songs. It's no secret that she can wail the bejesus out of any lyric from gasoline commercials to "Amazing Grace," but many have forgotten how moving her performances can be. Her recent material relies heavily on duets, and these songs are a mixed bag, but when the lights dim and it's just Aretha at the piano, the soul flies. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. July 5-7 at 8.)

Grateful Dead—The cult band of cult bands. Jerry Garcia may look like a relic, but his long, languid riffs can still make sprites and toughs and middle-aged hippies twirl together in the parking lot. A Dead show used to be a radical party for the counterculture; now it's a nostalgic gathering designed to prove that love for Jerry endures. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. 1-201 935-3900. July 9 at 7, and July 10 at 5.)

Howie Mandel—In a benefit performance for the American Lung Association. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. July 6 at 8.)

Jazz at Carnegie Hall—July 10: The All-Star Jazz Orchestra's tribute to Duke Ellington, conducted by Maurice Peress and Frank Wess. . . . ¶ July 12: A program of music by George Antheil, with Charles Castleman, the Mendelssohn String Quartet, the Palais Royale All-Star Jazz Band, and others. Conducted by Mr. Peress. . . . ¶ July 14: "The Clef Club Concert," with William Warfield; the Boys Choir of Harlem; Barbara Conrad, mezzo-soprano; and others. Conducted by Mr. Peress. (247-7800. Evenings at 8, with pre-concert lectures at 7.)

ARTS FESTIVALS

Summerfare—Opening performances of the tenth and final season—**FRANKFURT BALLET:** In William Forsythe's "Impressing the Czar." (July 7-8 at 8, and July 9 at 2:30.) . . . **DON GIOVANNI:** Peter Sellars' version, conducted by Craig Smith. (July 8 at 8.) . . . **STARY THEATRE:** Presenting "The Dybbuk," by Szymon Anski (July 8 at 8, July 9 at 2:30, and July 12 at 8) and "Hamlet IV" (July 9 at 7:30, and July 11 at 8). Both are in Polish, with simultaneous English translation, and both are directed by Andrzej Wajda. (State University of New York at Purchase. Through Aug. 6. For information about tickets and about round-trip bus transportation from Lincoln Center, call 1-914 253-5900.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Mets—Vs. the Cincinnati Reds, July 6-7 at 7:35, and July 8-9 at 1:35.

Yankees—Vs. the Milwaukee Brewers, July 3 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Detroit Tigers, July 4 at 1:30, July 5 at 7:30, and July 6 at 1. (Home base for the Mets is Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; and for the Yankees, Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except July 5 and July 11, at 1. Through July 31. The Coaching Club American Oaks is on July 3; the Suburban Handicap, July 4. . . . At Monmouth Park, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30. . . . At the Atlantic City Race Course: Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:15. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8 and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. Through Aug. 19. . . . At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Mondays through Saturdays, except July 4, at 7:45; July 4 at 1:15.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Bird Bath—Located across from the Mouse House and just north of the tapirs is the Bronx Zoo's new Wildfowl Marsh, a peaceful, murky place that both rare and common Anatidae (swans, geese, and ducks) can now call home. John Pierrepont, a zoo trustee, recently donated money to convert the formerly cement-bottomed duckpond into three acres of blooming, living swamp. Waterfowl nest among the ostrich ferns and false wild indigo that grow on three small islands, and the birds eat with genetically predetermined manners: they dive, dabble, dip, or graze. Divers, says a placard near the marsh, actually swim underwater; dabblers dunk their heads beneath the surface; dippers seem to be gargling; and grazers eat while standing on dry land. From a wooden walkway that juts over the marsh, you can watch ducks hop off their islands to dip, dabble, or just swim around. On weekday mornings, the marsh is unpeopled and as nice to listen to as it is to see: the only sounds are the quiet splashing and flapping of ducks and swans going about their business. The zoo opens every day at 10 and closes most days at 5. Take the No. 5 or the No. 2 subway to the East Tremont station and walk three blocks east, or take a Liberty Lines bus (652-8400), or a Metro-North commuter train (532-4900).

Central Park Band Shell—July 6 at 7:30: The New York Grand Opera's production of "Madame Butterfly." . . ¶ July 7 at 8:30: Ntozake Shange, with Jayne Cortez and Firespitter Ensemble. . . . ¶ July 8 at 3: Eddie Kirkland. . . . ¶ July 9 at 3: Tabou Combo. (Mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. For rain-date information, call 860-1335.)

Prospect Park Band Shell—July 7 at 8: Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy and the Bill Saxton quartet (rain date, July 8 at 3). . . . ¶ July 8 at 8: Steve Coleman & Five Elements, and Gretchen Langheld & House Afire (rain date, July 9 at 3). . . . ¶ July 9 at 8: The Persuasions, Hannibal Peterson, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic.

Jones Beach Theatre—One of the best concerts of the summer is headlined by New Order, whose music is machine-tooled perfection—a wall of melancholy techno-pop sound that you can dance to. Also on hand is Public Image Ltd., fronted by the nefarious John Lydon (né Rotten), who will taunt the crowd with songs of paranoia and betrayal while his band plays some of the scariest, most seductive music of the decade. The opening act is the Sugarcubes, an edgy, urgent-sounding band. (July 12 at 8. For information about tickets, call 1-516 221-1000.)

Riverstage—When the friends of Willie Nelson gather together, there is no stopping the good will and good times that ensue. Nelson is the great reclaimer; he finds tunes that have been covered many times over by other artists and makes them his own. With great charm and warmth, he'll sing the classics—his own and others'—and show why he is the most talented man in country music. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. July 12 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 757-3100.)

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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9	10	11	12			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 20.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
"Imitation of Life" (1959, directed by Douglas Sirk), with Lana Turner, John Gavin, and Sandra Dee. (Closed Mondays.)

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 3: "Batman" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through July 4: "Field of Dreams" (†).
From July 5: "Weekend at Bernie's" (Ted Kotcheff), with Andrew McCarthy and Jonathan Silverman.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
"Batman" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).
Theatre 2: "Great Balls of Fire!" (Jim McBride), with Dennis Quaid and Winona Ryder.
Theatre 3: "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" (William Shatner), with Shatner and Leonard Nimoy.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Ghostbusters II" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"A Sinful Life" (William Schreiner).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through July 6: "Batman" (†).
From July 7: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (Joe Johnston), with Rick Moranis.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Heathers" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through July 4: "Do the Right Thing" (Spike Lee), with Danny Aiello and Lee. From July 5: "Weekend at Bernie's" (Ted Kotcheff), with Andrew McCarthy and Jonathan Silverman.
Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing."

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Field of Dreams" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†).
Theatre 2: "Ghostbusters II" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dead Poets Society" (†).
Theatre 3: "Dead Poets Society" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "See No Evil, Hear No Evil" (Arthur Hiller), with Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor.
Theatre 2: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Karate Kid Part III" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" (William Shatner), with Shatner and Leonard Nimoy.
Theatre 2: "Vampire's Kiss" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Great Balls of Fire!" (Jim McBride), with Dennis Quaid and Winona Ryder.

U.A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Ghostbusters II" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).
Theatre 2: Through July 6: "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" (William Shatner), with Shatner and Leonard Nimoy. From July 7: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (Joe Johnston), with Rick Moranis.
Theatre 2: "Batman" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)
Through July 11: "Funny" (directed by Bran Ferren), a documentary.
From July 12: "Jimi Plays Monterey" (1986, D. A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus), a documentary.

Bleecker Street Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "Field of Dreams" (†).
Theatre 2: "Vincent: The Life and Death of Vincent van Gogh" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through July 4: "Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills" (†). From July 5: "Weekend at Bernie's" (Ted Kotcheff), with Andrew McCarthy and Jonathan Silverman.
Theatre 2: "The Karate Kid Part III" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
Through July 6: "A Sinful Life" (William Schreiner).
From July 7: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†).
Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (Spike Lee), with Danny Aiello and Lee.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (Joe Johnston), with Rick Moranis.
Theatre 2: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids."
Theatre 3: "The Navigator: An Odyssey Across Time" (Vincent Ward).
Theatre 4: Through July 6: "Murmur of the Heart" (†). From July 7: "Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†).
Theatre 2: Through July 6: "Field of Dreams" (†). From July 7: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.
Theatre 3: "The Karate Kid Part III" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 49th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†).
Theatre 2: "Ghostbusters II" (†).
Theatre 3: "Do the Right Thing" (Spike Lee), with Danny Aiello and Lee.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Karate Kid Part III" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through July 6: "Beaches" (†).
From July 7 (tentative): "Scandal" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"Milk and Honey" (Rebecca Yates and Glen Salzman), with Josette Simon and Luman Ward.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through July 6: "The Rainbow" (†).
From July 7: "Les Misérables" (1957, Jean-Paul Le Chanois; in French), with Jean Gabin.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Field of Dreams" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Great Balls of Fire!" (Jim McBride), with Dennis Quaid and Winona Ryder.

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Little Vera" (Vasily Pichul; in Russian), with Natalya Negoda.
Theatre 2: "Chocolat" (†).
Theatre 3: Through July 6: "Kung Fu Master" (Agnès Varda; in French). From July 7: "The Music Teacher" (Gérard Corbiau; in French).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Taxing Woman's Return" (Juzo Itami; in Japanese), with Nobuko Miyamoto.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Ghostbusters II" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" (William Shatner), with Shatner and Leonard Nimoy.
Theatre 2: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).
Theatre 3: "Dead Poets Society" (†).
Theatre 4: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 5: Through July 6: "Batman" (†). From July 7: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.
Theatre 6: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (Joe Johnston), with Rick Moranis.

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through July 4: "Do the Right Thing" (Spike Lee), with Danny Aiello and Lee. From July 5: "Weekend at Bernie's" (Ted Kotcheff), with Andrew McCarthy and Jonathan Silverman.
Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing."

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Karate Kid Part III" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 2: "No Holds Barred" (directed by Thomas J. Wright), with Hulk Hogan.
Theatre 3: "Pet Sematary" (Mary Lambert).
Theatre 4: "See No Evil, Hear No Evil" (Arthur Hiller), with Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor.
Theatre 5: Through July 4: "Batman" (†). From July 5: "Weekend at Bernie's" (Ted Kotcheff), with Andrew McCarthy and Jonathan Silverman.
Theatre 6: "Miracle Mile" (†).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (Joe Johnston), with Rick Moranis.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" (William Shatner), with Shatner and Leonard Nimoy.
Theatre 3: "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier."
Theatre 4: "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier."

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†).
Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (Spike Lee), with Danny Aiello and Lee.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"Lawrence of Arabia" (†).

West Side Cinema I and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: Through July 6: "Far from Home." From July 7: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.
Theatre 2: Through July 6: "Scandal" (†). From July 7: "Lethal Weapon 2."

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through July 4: "The Philadelphia Story" (1940, directed by George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart, Cary Grant, and Ruth Hussey; and "To Catch a Thief" (1955, Alfred Hitchcock), with

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Grant, Grace Kelly, Jessie Royce Landis, Charles Vanel, and Brigitte Auber.

July 5-6: "The General Died at Dawn" (1936, Lewis Milestone), with Madeleine Carroll and Gary Cooper; and "Lives of a Bengal Lancer" (1935, Henry Hathaway), with Cooper, Franchot Tone, and Richard Cromwell.

July 7-8: "Indiscreet" (†); and "Charade" (1963, Stanley Donen), with Cary Grant, Audrey Hepburn, Walter Matthau, James Coburn, George Kennedy, and Ned Glass.

July 9-10: "My Favorite Wife" (†); and "The Talk of the Town" (1942, George Stevens), with Cary Grant, Jean Arthur, and Ronald Colman.

July 11-12: "The Pride of the Yankees" (1942, Sam Wood), with Gary Cooper, Teresa Wright, Walter Brennan, and Dan Duryea; and "High Noon" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through July 4: Two programs of cartoons shown each day.

July 5-6: "Haunted Summer" (1989, Ivan Passer), with Philip Anglim, Laura Dern, Alice Krige, Eric Stoltz, and Alex Winter; and "Cutter's Way" (1981, Passer), with Jeff Bridges, John Heard, and Lisa Eichhorn.

July 7-8: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972, Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider; and "Sweet Movie" (1975, Dusan Makavejev; in French and English), with Pierre Clémenti and Carole Laure.

July 9: "The Whales of August" (†); and "All About Eve" (1950, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Bette Davis, Anne Baxter, Hugh Marlowe, Celeste Holm, and Thelma Ritter.

July 10-11: Two programs of cartoons shown each day.

From July 12: "Wise Blood" (†) and "Moby Dick" (†).

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)

Through July 4: "Toute une Nuit" (1982, Chantal Akerman; in French).

July 5-6: "Les Rendez-vous d'Anna" (1978, Chantal Akerman; in French).

July 7-10: Three films by Chantal Akerman, all in French—"On Tour with Pina Bausch" (1982), "J'ai Faim, J'ai Froid" (1984), and "Saute Ma Ville" (1968).

July 11-12: Three Akerman films—"News from Home" (1976), "Hotel Monterey" (1972, silent), and "La Chambre" (1972, silent).

Seaport Cinema, 210 Front St. (608-7889)

July 3: "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (1988, Philip Kaufman), with Daniel Day-Lewis, Lena Olin, Juliette Binoche, and Derek de Lint; and "Last Tango in Paris" (1972, Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider.

July 4-6: "The Wind" (1928, Victor Seastrom; silent), with Lillian Gish, Montagu Love, Lars Hanson, and Dorothy Cumming; and "Broken Blossoms" (1919, D. W. Griffith; silent), with Gish, Donald Crisp, and Richard Barthelmess.

July 7-10: "Nosferatu, the Vampyre" (1979, Werner Herzog; in German), with Klaus Kinski, Isabelle Adjani, and Bruno Ganz; and "The Fearless Vampire Killers" (1967, Roman Polanski), with Jack MacGowran and Sharon Tate.

From July 11: "Children of Paradise" (†).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

July 3: "Tommy" (1975, Ken Russell), with Ann-Margret, Oliver Reed, and Roger Daltrey; and "Little Shop of Horrors" (1986, Frank Oz), with Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene, and Vincent Gardenia.

July 4: "Bull Durham" (1988, Ron Shelton), with Kevin Costner, Susan Sarandon, and Tim Robbins; and "Eight Men Out" (1988, John Sayles).

July 5: "Maurice" (1987, James Ivory), with James Wilby, Hugh Grant, and Rupert Graves; and "A Room with a View" (1986, Ivory), with Maggie Smith, Denholm Elliott, Helena Bonham-Carter, Julian Sands, and Daniel Day-Lewis.

July 6: "Opera do Malandro" (1987, Ruy Guerra; in Spanish); and "Blood Wedding" (1981, Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Antonio Gades.

July 7-8: "Jean de Florette" (†) and "Manon of the Spring" (†).

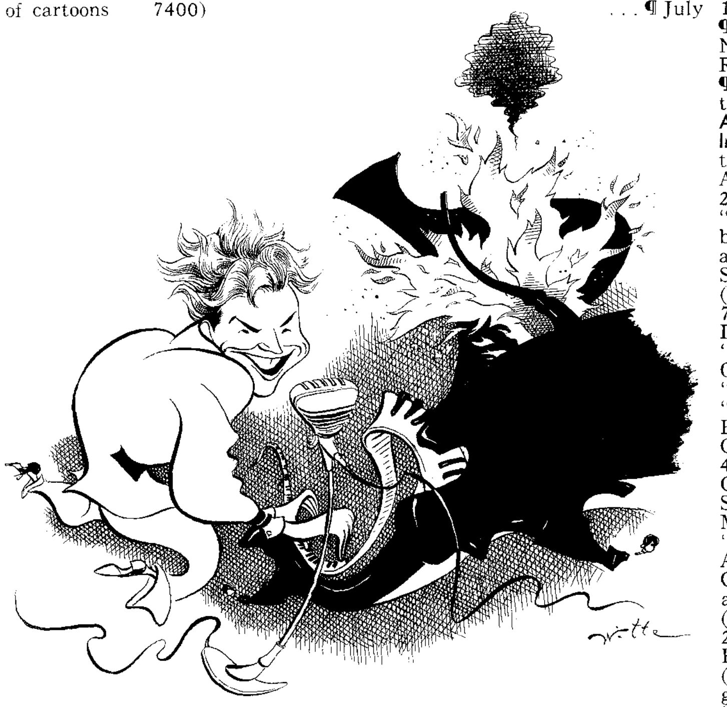
July 9: "Psycosissimo" (1962, Steno; in Italian), with Ugo Tognazzi; and "The Young Nun" (1964, Bruno Paolinelli; in Italian), with Laura Efrikian.

July 10: "The Last Picture Show" (†); and "Tucker: The Man and His Dream" (1988, Francis Ford Coppola), with Jeff Bridges.

July 11: "The Magician" (†); and "The Doll" (1964, Arne Mattsson; in Swedish), with Per Oscarsson.

July 12: "Pickup on South Street" (†); and "Scandal Sheet" (1952, Phil Karlson), with Broderick Crawford and Donna Reed.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)



Dennis Quaid in "Great Balls of Fire!"

July 3: "The Exterminating Angel" (1962, Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish), with Silvia Pinal; and "That Obscure Object of Desire" (1977, Buñuel; in French), with Fernando Rey, Carole Bouquet, and Angela Molina.

July 4: "An American in Paris" (1951, Vincente Minnelli), with Gene Kelly, Leslie Caron, and Oscar Levant; and "Rhapsody in Blue" (1945, Irving Rapper), with Joan Leslie, Robert Alda, Alexis Smith, and Levant.

July 5: "The Spanish Gardener" (1957, Philip Leacock), with Dirk Bogarde, Jon Whiteley, and Cyril Cusack; and "Finger of Guilt" ("The Intimate Stranger"; 1956, Joseph Losey), with Richard Basehart, Mary Murphy, and Constance Cummings.

July 6: "The Burmese Harp" (1956, Kon Ichikawa; in Japanese); and "The Makioka Sisters" (†).

July 7-8: "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (†) and "The Night of the Iguana" (†).

July 9: "La Dolce Vita" (1960, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.

July 10: "Circle of Deceit" (1982, Volker Schlöndorff; in German), with Bruno Ganz and Hanna Schygulla; and "The Tin Drum" (1980, Schlöndorff; in German), with David Bennent.

July 11: "The Sun Also Rises" (1957, Henry King), with Tyrone Power, Ava Gardner, Errol Flynn, Mel Ferrer, and Eddie Albert; and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (1952, King), with Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward, and Gardner.

July 12: "Red River" (†) and "Shane" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd. St. (708-9490)—Films directed by John Cassavetes. July 3 at 2:30: "Faces" (1968), with John Marley, Gena Rowlands, and Seymour Cassel. . . . ¶ July 3 at 6: "Shadows" (1960), with Hugh Hurd, Lelia Goldoni, and Ben Carruthers. . . . ¶ July 4 at 2:30: "Love Streams" (1984), with Cassavetes, Rowlands, and Diahnne Abbott. . . . ¶ July 4 at 6: "Faces." . . . ¶ July 6 at 2:30: "A Woman Under the Influence" (1974), with Peter Falk, Rowlands, and Katherine Cassavetes. . . . ¶ July 6 at 6: "The Killing of a Chinese Bookie" (1976), with Ben Gazzara, Timothy Agoglia Carey, and Cassel. . . . ¶ July 7 at 2:30: "Gloria" (1980), with Rowlands, Buck Henry, and John Adames. . . . ¶ July 7 at 6 and July 8 at 2: "Husbands" (1970), with Cassavetes, Gazzara, and Falk. . . . ¶ July 8 at 5: "Gloria." . . . ¶ July 9 at 2: "Big Trouble" (1985), with Falk, Alan Arkin, and Beverly D'Angelo. . . . ¶ July 9 at 5 and July 10 at 2:30: "A Child Is Waiting" (1963), with Burt Lancaster, Judy Garland, and Rowlands. . . . ¶ July 10 at 6: "Big Trouble." . . . ¶ July 11 at 2:30: "Opening Night" (1978), with Cassavetes, Rowlands, and Gazzara. . . . ¶ July 11 at 6: "A Woman Under the Influence."

American Museum of the Moving Image, 36th St. at 35th Ave., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—Avant-garde comedies. July 5 at 2:30: "The Cage" (1947) and "The Lead Shoes" (1949), both by Sidney Peterson. . . . ¶ July 6 at 2:30: "Blue Moses" (1962, Stan Brakhage) and "So Is This" (1982, Michael Snow). . . . ¶ July 7 at 2:30: "The Cage" and "The Lead Shoes." . . . ¶ July 8 at 2: "Recreation" (1956), "Horse Over Tea Kettle" (1962), "Jamestown Baloos" (1957), and "Bang" (1986), all by Robert Breer; and "Lineage" (1979, George Griffin). . . . ¶ July 8 at 4:30: "A Movie" (1958, Bruce Conner), "Breathdeath" (1964, Stan Vanderbeek), "Cartoon le Mousse" (1979, Chick Strand), "Louise Smells a Rat" (1982, Anne Flournoy), "Better Be Careful" (1986, Heather McAdams), and "Murder Psalm" (1981, Brakhage). . . . ¶ July 9 at 2: "Kafka Kamera" (1985, Anne Robertson), "Magazine Mouth" (1983, Robertson), "Schmeerguntz" (1966, Gunvor Nelson), "Covert Action" (1984, Abigail Child), "Who Do You Think You Are" (1987, Mary Filippo), and "C'mon Babe (Danke Schoen)" (1989, Sharon Sandusky). . . . ¶ July 9 at 4:30: "Blonde Cobra" (1963, Ken Jacobs) and "The End" (1953, Christopher MacLaine). . . . ¶ July 12 at 2:30: "Recreation," "Horse Over Tea Kettle," "Jamestown Baloos," "Bang," and "Lineage."

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing at either the Jonas Mekas Theatre or the Maya Deren Theatre. July 6 at 8 and July 7 at 5: "The Bam Zone: Permanent Residents" (1987, Mikhail Pavlov), "And the Past Seems But a Dream" (1987, Sergei Miroschnichenko), "Theatre Square" (1988, Grigor Arutunyan), "The Tailor" (1988, Vladislav Mirzoyan), and "Early on Sunday" (1987, Murat Mamedov). . . . ¶ July 7 at 8:30 and July 8 at 4: "The Limit" (1986, Tatyana Skabard), "Are You Going to the Ball?" (1987, Nadezhda Khvorova), "Dialogues" (1987, Nikolai Obukovich), and "The Temple" (1987, Vladimir Dyakonov). . . . ¶ July 8 at 8 and July 9 at 4: "Marshal Blucher: A Portrait Against the Background of an Epoch" (1988, Vladimir Eisner), "The Wood Goblin" (1987, Boris Kustov), "The Trial" (1988, Igor Belyayev), and "This Is How We Live" (1987, Vladimir Oseledchik).

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"MB Playhouse," a chance to see the television dramas you may have missed in the past thirty years. July 5-8: Horton Foote's "Travelling Lady" (1957, CBS), with Kim Stanley and Robert Loggia. . . . From July 11: Sumner Locke Elliot's "Wish on the Moon" (1953, NBC), with Eva Marie Saint; and F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Rich Boy" (1952, NBC), with Grace Kelly. Showings Tuesdays at 3 and 6 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 3. . . . ¶ Comedies seen

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

on cable. July 5-8: "History of White People in America, Parts I and II" (1986), hosted by Martin Mull. . . . From July 11: "David Letterman: Looking for Fun" (1982) and "Your New American Actress Friend, Sandra Bernhard" (1986). Showings Tuesdays at 12:15 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:15. . . . ¶ Commemoration of Richard Rodgers. July 5-8: "Rodgers and Hammerstein" (1954, ABC, CBS, NBC), celebrating the tenth anniversary of their collaboration, with such performers as Gordon MacRae, Florence Henderson, Yul Brynner, and Ezio Pinza. . . . From July 11: "Rodgers and Hart Today" (1967, ABC), with Bobby Darin, the Supremes, the Mamas and the Papas, and others. Showings Tuesdays at 2:30 and 6:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 2:30. . . . ¶ Shows produced and directed by Gary Smith and Dwight Hemion. July 5-8: "Singer Presents Tony Bennett" (1966, ABC) and "Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass" (1967, CBS). . . . From July 11: "Jonathan Winters: A Wild Winters Night" (1964, NBC) and "Alan King's Wonderful World of Aggravation" (1972, ABC). Showings Tuesdays through Saturdays at 1.

92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. (996-1100)—July 6 at 8: "Eight Men Out" (1988, John Sayles). Following the screening, Eliot Asinof, author of the book "Eight Men Out," and Dr. Sybil Del Gaudio will talk about the film.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Roger Angell.)

Batman—With Jack Nicholson and Michael Keaton, directed by Tim Burton. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Sutton; through July 6.)

Beaches—This movie about the lifelong friendship between two women of contrasting backgrounds—Bette Midler as CC Bloom, a show-biz-crazy Jewish redhead from New York, and Barbara Hershey as Hillary Whitney, a repressed wealthy Wasp from San Francisco—suggests the kind of material that Midler might be using for a takeoff. Instead, it's being played for maudlin soulfulness. After a while, it turns into an all-girl "Love Story," with Hillary becoming ghoulishly pale from heart disease and CC (now a singing star) staying at her side. If you admired Midler in "The Rose" and "Down and Out in Beverly Hills," you may want to bash your head against the wall. With Mayim Bialik, who must have been specially created to be CC at eleven, and John Heard. The director, Garry Marshall, shows no feeling for the material—not even false feeling; the script, by Mary Agnes Donoghue, is from Iris Rainer Dart's novel.—P.K. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/23/89.) (57th St. Playhouse; through July 6.)

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (1958)—The Tennessee Williams play about the girl (Elizabeth Taylor) whose husband (Paul Newman) doesn't want to have sex with her. Much hocus-pocus about the reasons; when the "true" reason is revealed, it sounds the hokiest. But Taylor looks very desirable, and the cast is full of actors whooping it up with Southern accents (Burl Ives, Judith Anderson, Madeleine Sherwood). Directed by Richard Brooks.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 7-8.)

Children of Paradise (1945)—This lushly romantic creation, directed by Marcel Carné and written by Jacques Prévert, is a one-of-a-kind film, a sumptuous epic about the relations between theatre and life. At first, it may seem a romance set in the Paris of Balzac; it turns into a comparison of dramatic modes—it includes at least five kinds of theatrical performance. And, encompassing these, it is a film poem on the nature and varieties of love—sacred and profane, selfless and possessive. It was made during the Occupation, and it is said that the starving extras made away with some of the banquets before they could be photographed. With Jean-Louis Barrault as the soulful mime Deburau (the Pierrot—Barrault sucks in his cheeks so much that he sometimes suggests Dietrich); the incomparable Arletty as Garance; Pierre Brasseur as the Shakespearean actor Lemaître (the Harlequin); Louis Salou as the count; Marcel Herrand as the philosophical murderer; Pierre Renoir as the ragpicker-informer; and Maria Casarès, who has the unrewarding role of the theatre manager's daughter, who marries Deburau and becomes the mother of an abominable offspring. (The child is pure Hollywood.) In French.—P.K. (Seaport Cinema; starting July 11.)

Chocolat—Whatever Claire Denis's first feature is supposed to be about, it proves, at least, that the English don't have a monopoly on swanky colonial torpor. The movie is constructed as an extended flashback: a young Frenchwoman (named France) travelling in Africa remembers her fifties girlhood in a remote outpost of Cameroon, where her father was a district officer. Most of this story consists of smoldering looks exchanged by the girl's beautiful mother (Giulia Boschi) and the family's handsome African "boy," Protée (Isaach de Bankolé). When Maman feels herself becoming too hot and bothered at the sight of the noble black man, she brusquely orders him to fetch something; Protée deals with his frustration by taking a lot of showers. Nothing actually happens. In denying him any kind of release for his pent-up desire, Denis encourages us to think she's making a political point. What she's really doing is dehumanizing him—treating him as a gleaming hunk whose anger and wounded reserve just make him more exotically alluring. "Chocolat" looks pretty good, but it's merde in a fancy wrapper. In French.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Dangerous Liaisons—One of the least static costume films ever made, and what costumes! The women—Glenn Close, Michelle Pfeiffer, Uma Thurman, Swoosie Kurtz, Mildred Natwick—look as if they'd been dressed by Gainsborough. (Actually, it was James Acheson, who also dressed "The Last Emperor.") Principally about the erotic power games played by the Marquise de Merteuil (Glenn Close) and the Vicomte de Valmont (John Malkovich), who were once lovers but are now allies and co-conspirators, this first-rate piece of work by the daring and agile director Stephen Frears is alive in a way that movies of classics rarely are. The paradisially beautiful Pfeiffer is wonderfully affecting as the pawn of the debauchers' final game. The screenwriter, Christopher Hampton, reworked his 1985 theatrical version of the 1782 novel by Choderlos de Laclos; cinematography by Philippe Rousselot.—P.K. (1/9/89) (Festival.)

When Frank Sinatra presented an honorary Oscar to Cary Grant in 1970, Sinatra said, with star-to-star sympathy, that he earned it "for being Cary Grant." Actually, he earned it for acting Cary Grant—the urban cavalier with a quick tongue and cunning moves.

Grant never played Grant better than in Stanley Donen's 1963 thriller "Charade" (at the Biograph Cinema's Cary Grant tribute, July 7th and 8th). This Hitchcockian pastiche boasts as many surprises, laughs, and romantic frissons as Hitchcock's own, better-known "North by Northwest"—also starring Grant. In "Charade," Grant is an elegant American in Paris who teams up with Audrey Hepburn to find her murdered husband's loot before it's snatched by the dead man's Army buddies (James Coburn, George Kennedy, Ned Glass).

Screenwriter Peter Stone's clever blend of love story, crime caper, and black comedy allows Donen to showcase not only Grant's effortless suavity and wicked timing but also his unexpected emotional conviction and goofy faces. Hepburn swoons eloquently, Coburn brings a wonderful twang and lope to the part of a treacherous Texan, and Walter Matthau, as a bogus C.I.A. man, is a master of the hangdog look. But it's Grant's movie—the action hinges on whether he'll inspire Hepburn's trust. As she picks her way through a rubble of farcical disillusionments, Hepburn learns how to stop worrying and love Cary Grant.

Dead Poets Society—Robin Williams gives an astonishingly empathic performance as an eager, dedicated prep-school teacher in the late fifties. This teacher talks to his boys about the passions expressed in poetry and helps them release their creative impulses. But one of the boys, soaring on his new confidence, lacks the shrewdness and courage to deal with his rigid, uncomprehending father, and makes a disastrous choice. Directed by Peter Weir, from a script by Thomas Schulman, the picture draws out the obvious and turns itself into a classic. Weir, it appears, is more interested in the elegiac than in the dramatic. Like his "Gallipoli," this film has a gold ribbon attached to it. The perception of reality here is the black and white of pulp fiction (without the visceral excitement). With Robert Sean Leonard, Ethan Hawke, Josh Charles, Gale Hansen, and Kurtwood Smith and Norman Lloyd.—P.K. (6/26/89) (Gramercy, Cinema II, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Guild, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Field of Dreams—Doggerel emotion. Kevin Costner, a New Age farmer in Iowa, longs to be reconciled with his dead father, a minor-league baseball player whose outlook he had rejected in the sixties. He hears a whispered command to build a baseball field, and when he does the spirits of Shoeless Joe Jackson (Ray Liotta) and the other White Sox who were barred from baseball for life after the 1919 World Series scandal arrive and play regularly. This is only the beginning of the hero's mystical encounters. That the film is sincere doesn't mean it's not manipulative; when the weepers in the audience start up, you may feel like a pariah if you're not moved. Adapted by the writer-director Phil Alden Robinson from W. P. Kinsella's 1982 novel "Shoeless Joe." With Amy Madigan, James Earl Jones, Burt Lancaster, Dwier Brown as the father, and Gaby Hoffman.—P.K. (5/1/89) (59th Street East Cinema, Bleecker Street Cinema, and Cinema 3. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema; through July 4. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex; through July 6.)

Ghostbusters II—With Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver, and Harold Ramis; directed by Ivan Reitman. (Reviewed in this issue.) (34th St. East, Baronet, Coronet, U.A. East, Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Worldwide Cinemas, Regency, Olympia, and National Twin.)

Heathers—Westerburg High's three rich beauties who make life hell for those less gilded are all named Heather. Their reluctant associate, Veronica (Winona Ryder), confides in her diary that she dreams of "a world without Heather," and a psychotically fearless juvenile delinquent, J.D. (Christian Slater), materializes, and goads her to become his accomplice in making her dream come true. The script, by Daniel Waters, has a lot of prankish, spiky dialogue and some good rowdy slapstick nastiness, such as Veronica and J.D.'s killing two football heroes and arranging their deaths to suggest that they were lovers in a suicide pact; the script promises that the picture will lift off into the junior division of Blue Velvetland. But layers of didacticism weigh it down, and the young, inexperienced director, Michael Lehmann (who uses hyper-bright colors for a facetious artificial effect), doesn't find the right moods for the gags. Where's the sting?—P.K. (4/17/89) (Plaza.)

High Noon (1952)—The Western form is used for a sneak civics lesson. Gary Cooper is the marshal who fights alone for law and order when his cowtown is paralyzed by fear. Much has been made of the film's structure (it runs from 10:40 A.M. to high noon, coinciding with the running time of the film); of the stark settings and the long shadows; of the screenwriter Carl Foreman's psychological insight and his buildup of suspense. When the film came out, there were actually people who said it was a poem of force comparable to "The Iliad." But its insights are primer sociology, and the demonstration of the town's cowardice is Q.E.D. It's a tight piece of work, though—well directed by Fred Zinnemann. With Grace Kelly, Katy Jurado, Lee Van Cleef, Thomas Mitchell, Lloyd Bridges, Henry Morgan, Lon Chaney, Jr., and Otto Kruger.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; July 11-12.)

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade—This mediocre third film in the Indiana Jones trilogy—a reprise of the first, "Raiders of the Lost Ark"—is a mixture of cliffhanger and anti-Nazi thriller and religious spectacle. It's enjoyable, but familiar, and the action lacks the exhilarating, leaping precision that the director, Steven Spielberg, is famous for. The only real spin is in the slapstick teamwork of Harrison Ford, as the archeologist-adventurer Indy, and Sean Connery, as Indy's father, a medievalist who's too engrossed in his studies to pay much attention to his daredevil son's triumphs. With River Phoenix playing Indy as a boy, Alison Doody, Denholm Elliott, John Rhys-Davies, and Julian Glover. The screenplay, by Jeffrey Boam, is based on a story devised by the producer George Lucas and Menno Meyjes.—P.K. (6/12/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Loews Orpheum, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

Indiscreet (1958)—Rather tired. One of those would-be fluffy comedies written by Norman Krasna. Cary Grant, an American diplomat abroad, pretends to be married so that Ingrid Bergman, an actress with whom he's having an affair, won't get matrimonial ambitions. Of course, he's found out, and the wheels grind on to a happy ending. Stanley Donen directed; Cecil Parker and Phyllis Calvert round out the cast of people who are a little overage for the childish pranks.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; July 7-8.)

Jean de Florette (1985)—The setting is Provence in the early nineteen-twenties. As the hunchback Jean de Florette, an educated, nature-loving city fellow who has learned about farming from books, Gérard Depardieu wears "GOOD MAN" in capital letters across his wide brow; in smaller letters we can read "He has poetry in his soul." Jean has a devoted wife (Elisabeth Depardieu), who used to sing in opera, and a delicate little daughter named Manon. And for slightly over two hours we watch him trudge across the land he has inherited hauling two barrels of water that are fastened across his hump. When there is no rain, his plants shrivel and his rabbits die, and it's agonizing for us, because we know that there's a spring of fresh mountain water on his land. His neighbors—the prosperous, greedy old peasant César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and César's dull-witted nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil)—have hidden the spring under a load of cement, so that Jean will be forced to sell out to them. Adapted from the first volume of Marcel Pagnol's two-part novel "The Water of the Hills," "Jean de Florette" was followed by "Manon of the Spring" (see below). The director, Claude Berri, who did the adaptation with Gérard Brach, aimed for fidelity to the novel; he has said that it was his task to give the material "a cinematic rhythm," but that "there was no need for imagination." That's what *he* thinks. In French.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; July 7-8.)

The Last Picture Show (1971)—This straightforward, involving, narrative picture about growing up in a small town in Texas in the early fifties was Peter Bogdanovich's first great success. It's plain and uncondescending in its re-creation of what it means to be a high-school athlete, of what a country dance hall is like, of the necking in cars and movie houses, and of the desolation that follows high-school graduation. Concerned with adolescent experience seen in terms of flatlands anomie—loneliness, ignorance about sex, confusion about one's aims in life—the movie has a basic decency of feeling, with people relating to one another, sometimes on very simple levels, and becoming miserable when they can't relate. Robert Surtees's stylized cinematography is in black and white, and the frequent silhouetting—so that we seem to be looking at a map of life as it was—helps to clarify the subject matter. The film badly needs this stylization, because, of course, its shallow overview of town life is dangerously close to TV, and especially to the "Peyton Place" series. The movie suggests what TV soap opera would be if it looked at ordinary experience in a nonexploitative way, if it had observation and humor. This is perhaps an *ideal* TV show. From Larry McMurtry's novel, adapted by McMurtry together with the director. With Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Ellen Burstyn, Cybill Shepherd, Ben Johnson, Eileen Brennan, and Cloris Leachman.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; July 10.)

Lawrence of Arabia (1962)—If you went to see it under the delusion that it was going to be about T. E. Lawrence, you probably stayed to enjoy the vastness of the desert and the pleasures of the senses that a huge movie epic can provide. Directed by David Lean, from a script by Robert Bolt, loosely based on Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom," this picture fails to give an acceptable interpretation of Lawrence, or to keep its action intelligible, but it is one of the most literate and tasteful and exciting of expensive spectacles. The central figure is played quite stunningly by Peter O'Toole, though he seems to be doing "Lord Jim"—which he was cast in a couple of years later (and then it looked as if he were doing Lawrence all over again). Bolt and Lean turn the hero into such a flamboyant poetic enigma that he is displaced in the film by a simpler hero—Omar Sharif's Ali, a handsome sheikh with liquid brown eyes and conventionally sympathetic lines to speak. As it became apparent that most people in the audience hadn't the remotest idea of what the Arabs and the Turks were doing in the First World War, or which was which, or why the English cared, the question raised by the movie was, Can complicated historical events and a complex hero really get across in a spectacle? With Alec Guinness, José Ferrer, Anthony Quinn, Arthur Kennedy, Jack Hawkins, Claude Rains, Anthony Quayle, and Donald Wolfit. Cinematography by Freddie Young; music by Maurice Jarre. (The film, substantially cut after its first release, has been restored to a more or less definitive version, running 217 minutes.)—P.K. (Warner.)

The Magician (1958)—This Ingmar Bergman film isn't a masterwork, or even a very good movie, but it is clearly a film made by a master. It has a fairy-tale atmosphere of expectation, like those stories that begin "We started out to see the King, and along the way we met . . ." Then it becomes confused and argumentative. But the mysterious images of Max von Sydow as the nineteenth-century mesmerist, Vogler, and Ingrid Thulin as his assistant, Aman (Vogler's wife, Manda, in male disguise), carry so much latent charge of meaning that they dominate the loosely thrown-together material. Bergman labels the film a comedy, though audiences may not agree. It's a metaphysical gothic tale, with some low-comedy scenes and some grisly jokes involving an eyeball and a hand. The theme—magic versus rationalism or, if one prefers, faith versus skepticism, or art versus science, or illusion versus reality—is treated too theatrically to sustain such heavy-breathing dialogue as "I always longed for a knife to cut away my tongue and my sex—to cut away all impurities." There are times when one would be happy to hand Bergman that knife. With Gunnar Björnstrand, Bibi Andersson, and Erland Josephson. In Swedish.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; July 11.)

The Makioka Sisters (1983)—This Kon Ichikawa film has a triumphant simplicity about it. You don't just watch the film—you coast on its rhythms and glide past the precipitous spots. Ichikawa celebrates the delicate beauty of the four Makioka sisters—the heiresses of an aristocratic Osaka family, who move as if always conscious that they must be visual poetry—and at the same time he makes you feel that there's something amusingly perverse in their poise and their politesse. Set in 1938, the film is based on Junichiro

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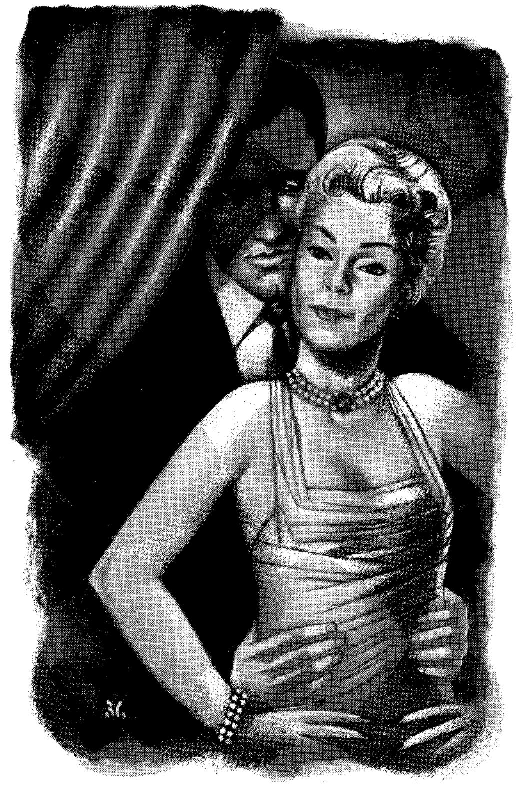
Tanizaki's novel, originally titled "A Light Snowfall," and it's like a succession of evanescent revelations—the images are stylized and formal, yet the quick cutting melts them away. The venerable Ichikawa is doing what so many younger directors have claimed to be doing: he's making visual music. And he's doing it without turning the actors into zombies, and without losing his sense of how corruption and beauty and humor are all rolled up together. The themes are worked out in shades of pearl and ivory for the interiors and bursts of color outside—cherry and maple and red-veined burgundy. In Japanese.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 6.)

Manon of the Spring (1987)—Will fate settle the hash of César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and his cretinous nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil), the Provençal farmers whose treachery caused the death of gentle, hunchbacked Jean de Florette? Of course it will. To keep us awake while we're waiting for the inevitable, this concluding half of Claude Berri's adaptation of the Marcel Pagnol novel "The Water of the Hills" serves up pretty much the same menu as "Jean de Florette": changing seasons (exquisitely shot by Bruno Nuytten), Montand looking sly, Auteuil gaping, wiry peasants and fat shopkeepers shouting at each other over bottles of vin ordinaire. Ten years after the hunchback's death, his daughter, Manon, has grown up to become a ravishing, dewy-eyed blond nymph, played by Emmanuelle Béart. She looks as if she were modelling a line of designer goatherdswear for *Elle* or *Marie-Claire*, and her very contemporary sexiness might make us a little suspicious of the ostentatious purity of this big-budget period drama. Screenplay by Berri and Gérard Brach, with a credit for original dialogue by Pagnol. In French.—T.R. (Thalia SoHo; July 7-8.)

Miracle Mile—Steve DeJarnatt's original script has a nice, morbidly funny premise: Harry, a young musician (Anthony Edwards), has finally met a girl he really likes (Mare Winningham)—and then he finds out that a nuclear war is going to start in about fifty minutes. (There's always something.) This is a doomed-love scenario so extreme that at first we can't believe that we're meant to take it seriously. The tone is awkward, uncertain—DeJarnatt doesn't write great dialogue—but the film is absorbing and unexpectedly moving. DeJarnatt's direction is much surer than his writing: he keeps his attention focussed on the action, doesn't linger to philosophize on the big issues, and allows the relationship between Edwards and Winningham to develop its own urgent momentum. And the movie, shot mostly at night on the particularly garish stretch of L.A.'s Wilshire Boulevard known as the Miracle Mile, has a bold, distinctive look.—T.R. (Criterion Center.)

Moby Dick (1956)—It's an impressive attempt to be faithful to Melville, and the battles with the elements (and the whale) were so difficult to stage that the footage was shot over a two-year period, while the cost of the production rose to almost five million dollars. Yet for all his dedication to this ambitious project, the director, John Huston, must not have been able to keep up his energy level; at times, his work seems surprisingly perfunctory. The film begins imaginatively, with Richard Basehart as Ishmael going down to the shore, and has all kinds of stirring things in it—Orson Welles' reading of Father Mapple's wonderful sermon about Jonah; finely textured cinematography by Oswald Morris, which has the look of steel engravings and calls up suggestions of Coleridge; great rhetoric; and a general display of Huston's pyrotechnics. But Gregory Peck—the least demonic of leading men—is a disastrous Ahab; bearded, he looks like a stock-company Lincoln. And the movie doesn't add up to anything approaching the novel; it lacks the unity, the rhythm, the poetry, the mind at work. There are still more than enough reasons to see it, however. Ray Bradbury and Huston wrote the screenplay.—P.K. (Cinema Village; starting July 12.)



Lana Turner and John Gavin in "Imitation of Life"

Murmur of the Heart (1971)—Louis Malle's exhilarating high comedy about French bourgeois life. He looks into his own back yard—the film is set in Dijon in 1954, at the time of Dien Bien Phu, and it's about the sex education of the fourteen-year-old Laurent (Benoit Ferreux), the youngest, brightest son of a successful gynecologist (Daniel Gélin) and his Italian-born wife (Léa Massari). Malle sees not only the prudent, punctilious surface but the volatile and slovenly life underneath. His bourgeois bestiary is funny and appalling and also—surprisingly—hardy and happy. This is perhaps the first time on film that anyone has shown us the bourgeoisie enjoying its privileges. Massari is superb as Clara, the carelessly sensual mother who is loved by her sons because of her indifference to the bourgeois forms, which they nevertheless accept—on the surface, that is. With Michel Lonsdale as Father Henri. The script is by Malle. In French.—P.K. (Quad Cinema; through July 6.)

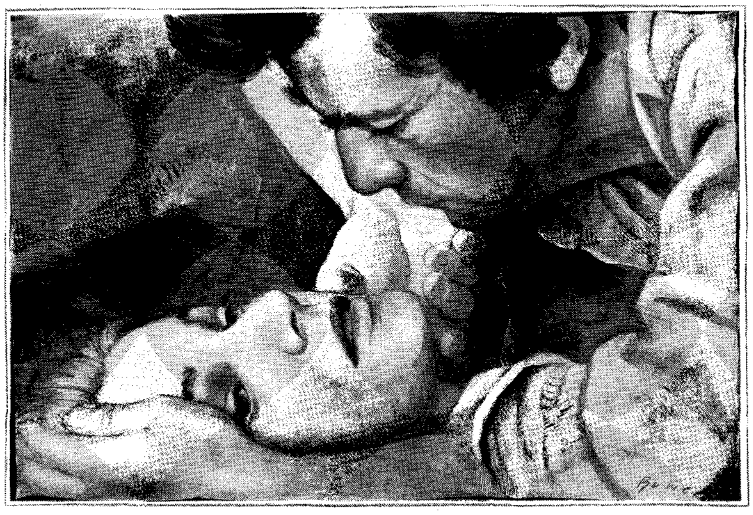
My Favorite Wife (1940)—Tennyson wrote "Enoch Arden" in 1864, and the movies have been making versions of it ever since D. W. Griffith did it in 1908 (and again in 1911). This one is the most famous and the funniest. On the day Cary Grant (as Nick Arden) marries Gail Patrick, his wife, Irene Dunne, shipwrecked seven years before, comes home. She follows the newlyweds on their honeymoon, prevents the consummation of the marriage, and, like a smart kitty, purrs herself to an ultimate victory. Garson Kanin was twenty-seven (and at his liveliest) when he directed this screwball-classic hit. Randolph Scott plays the vegetarian scientist who was Dunne's companion on the island. Written by Bella and Samuel Spewack, with Leo McCarey.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; July 9-10.)

The Night of the Iguana (1964)—Richard Burton is the defrocked clergyman working as a tour guide; Ava Gardner is the strumpety widow who operates the run-down Mexican hotel where the action centers; Deborah Kerr is the saintly, middle-aged spinster from Nantucket, travelling with her ninety-seven-year-old poet-grandfather (Cyril Delevanti); Sue Lyon is the teen-ager out to seduce the minister; and Grayson Hall is the head of the schoolteachers' tour group. The director, John Huston, brings some coarse melodramatic vitality to the Tennessee Williams play, but whatever poetry it had seems to have leaked out. And without that the movie is terribly obvious, sentimental, and plain dumb. It's also indifferently made.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 7-8.)

Pickup on South Street (1953)—Richard Widmark as a scroungy petty gangster who sneaks a look into a woman's handbag, turns up some microfilm, and finds himself dealing with Communist agents. Samuel Fuller wrote the script (adapted from Dwight Taylor's story written for the screen) and directed, in his fast, flashy, essentially empty-minded style. The film isn't boring—there's always something going on—but you come away with nothing. (It isn't that Fuller's insensitive, exactly; it's that he's totally unconcerned with sensitivity—it would get in his way.) With Thelma Ritter.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; July 12.)

The Rainbow—The pastoral locations are grassy vistas that seem to melt before your eyes, and the images suggest that the material—the second half of the D. H. Lawrence novel about marriage—is being approached with humility and seriousness. This isn't one of the director Ken Russell's lurid, campy pictures. But his underlying attitudes haven't really changed; the campiness is simply more restrained, and the movie is amorphous and unsatisfying. As Ursula Brangwen, who (in the novel) yearns for sexual and spiritual union, Sammi Davis seems merely petulant. One of the pioneering feminist heroines—a woman who represents an advance on previous generations, a woman on a quest—has been turned into a snippy, closed-off brat. Both Glenda Jackson and Christopher Gable are surprisingly relaxed (and effective) as Ursula's parents, and David Hemmings is very smooth as her smiling, corrupt uncle.—P.K. (5/29/89) (Paris; through July 6.)

Red River (1948)—A magnificent horse opera—one of the more elaborate celebrations of those trailblazing episodes that Hollywood used to glorify as "historical events"—this time it's the mid-nineteenth-century first cattle drive up the Chisholm Trail. The director, Howard Hawks, structures the drive as an exciting series of stampedes, Indian battles, and gunfights, with a ferocious climax in the fight between the two principals —John Wayne, as the father, and Montgomery Clift, as the adopted son. A lot of it is just terrible, but Clift—in his most aggressively sexual screen performance—is angular and tense and audacious, and the other actors brawl amusingly in the strong-silent-man tradition. Russell



Gena Rowlands and Peter Falk in "A Woman Under the Influence"

Harlan's photography makes the rolling plains the true hero; the setting has epic grandeur. The screenplay is by Borden Chase and Charles Schnee, from Chase's story "The Chisholm Trail," but, as Chase admitted, it's actually "Mutiny on the Bounty" turned into a Western, with Wayne as Captain Bligh and Clift as Fletcher Christian. The cast includes Walter Brennan, Harry Carey, Coleen Gray, John Ireland, and frantic Joanne Dru, who acts as if the Old West were Greenwich Village.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 12.)

Scandal—Tepid. The director, Michael Caton-Jones, and the writer, Michael Thomas, who dig up the Profumo affair, might have used it as the basis for a satirical slice of history; instead, they've made a sentimental docu-drama—one more English film about the cruelty of the class system. What sustains a viewer is the narrative, with its evocative details of life in London from 1959 to 1963—how the teen-age showgirl Christine Keeler (Joanne Whalley-Kilmer), bored with the middle-aged dignitaries that the society osteopath Stephen Ward (John Hurt) introduced her to, took on a West Indian lover and then another West Indian, and how, as a result of a violent quarrel between the two, a newspaperman got on her trail. She then offered up the story of her earlier gentlemen callers, the Tory Secretary of State for War, John Profumo (Ian McKellen), and the assistant naval attaché of the Soviet Embassy (Jeroen Krabbé). And bang! The tabloids whipped up indignation over the decadence of the "Establishment"—over sadomasochism and spies and naked bathing in Lord Astor's pool. Whalley-Kilmer's opaque, unreadable Christine comes to life a bit in her scenes with her showgirl pal, Mandy Rice-Davies, played by Bridget Fonda, who brings a gamine crispness to the role. She's the movie's only wild card. With Daniel Massey and Roland Gift.—P.K. (5/15/89) (West Side Cinema; through July 6. . . . ¶ 57th St. Playhouse; starting July 7, tentative.)

Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills—The script, by Bruce Wagner, from a satirical sex-farce plot he devised with the director, Paul Bartel, calls for something like the goosey stylized acting that Charles Ludlam perfected at the Ridiculous Theatrical Company, but Bartel has directed with his usual home-movies sluggishness. Two houseboys, a cynic (Ray Sharkey) and a romantic (Robert Beltran), who work in adjacent mansions, bet on which one will be the first to make out with the other's employer—one a divorcée (Mary Woronov), the other a widow (Jacqueline Bisset). The households include various siblings, offspring, and hangers-on (Arnetia Walker, Ed Begley, Jr., Wallace Shawn, Paul Mazursky, Rebecca Schaeffer, Edith Diaz, and others)—all of them libidinous or gaga. Arnetia Walker manages to bring in some zesty horseplay, and Bisset's amused calm is occasionally pleasant, but mostly this is just mistimed, failed camp, and some of the lines that are meant to be screamingly dirty-funny come out screamingly sour. (The sound recording is poor.)—P.K. (68th St. Playhouse, and Carnegie Hall Cinema. . . . ¶ Waverly; through July 4. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting July 7.)

Shane (1953)—The Western stranger in town consciously turned into Galahad on the range. Superficially, this is a Western, but from Shane's knightly costume, from the way his horse canters, from the Agincourt music, it's all too recognizable as an attempt to create a myth. With chivalric purity as his motivation, the enigmatic Shane (Alan Ladd) defeats enemies twice his size—the largest is the Prince of Darkness himself, Jack Palance. The earth-loving Wyoming homesteaders befriended by Shane include Van Heflin, Jean Arthur as Heflin's wife, and Brandon deWilde as their child. This George Stevens film is overplanned and uninspired: Westerns are better when they're not so self-importantly self-conscious. However, audiences wept over the scene in which a dog mourns at his master's coffin, and Jean Arthur's farewell handshake to Shane—whom she loves—brought forth sniffles. Brandon deWilde's final cry, "Shane," was heard for years wherever kids played. With Edgar Buchanan, Elisha Cook, Jr., Ben Johnson, and Emile Meyer. The screenplay is by A. B. Guthrie, Jr., from Jack Schaefer's novel.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 12.)

Vampire's Kiss—Nicolas Cage is airily amazing here. As a Manhattan literary agent—a poseur with a high-flown accent and a pouty, snobbish stare—he does some of the way-out stuff that you love actors in silent movies for doing. Something between a horror picture and a black comedy, this may be the first vampire movie in which the modern office building replaces the castle as the site of torture and degradation. Despite some narrative confusion, the movie has an effective scary wackiness. With Maria Conchita Alonso, Jennifer Beals, Kasi Lemmons, and Elizabeth Ashley. Directed by Robert Bierman, with a script by Joseph Minion.—P.K. (6/12/89) (Loews New York Twin.)

Vincent: The Life and Death of Vincent van Gogh (1987)—Paul Cox's documentary biography of the great painter is earnest, honorable, and uninspired. Cox has the good idea to tell the story in the artist's own words: the voice-over narration consists entirely of excerpts from letters written by van Gogh to his brother Theo. (They are read, with tremendous solemnity and perhaps an excess of actorly skill, by John Hurt.) But Cox's use of the letters is crude: van Gogh's raw, anguished meditations on life and art are presented without irony, as if he really were a profound thinker. The words actually dominate the images; at times, the beautiful paintings function only as illustrations of the deep thoughts. Cox also includes endless footage of Dutch and French countryside, as well as a handful of staged tableaux—peasants eating potatoes, a scene in a cabaret, the painter's funeral. It's all much too pretty—"painterly" in a horribly naïve way. He seems to be trying to compete with van Gogh as a maker of images; he loses. Cox's excesses mirror van Gogh's, but his art doesn't: in this film, the light always seems to be coming from the wrong direction.—T.R. (Bleecker Street Cinema.)

The Whales of August (1987)—This is the sort of movie in which dignified old people study the horizon and ask each other, "Have you seen the whales?" It doesn't take much imagination to figure out that those whales are going to stay offscreen for the duration. Bette Davis and Lillian Gish aren't so lucky. Playing a pair of sisters who live together on the Maine coast, they're trapped before our eyes, trying to give a semblance of reality to writer David Berry's clunky, fake-Chekhovian conceits. They get no help from Lindsay Anderson's direction: the rhythm he imposes on the film is punishingly slow, and has the cruel effect of making us irritable and impatient with his elderly characters. Endangered by Anderson and Berry, the actresses somehow manage to escape with their dignity. Also featuring Ann Sothern, in good sidekick form as a gossipy neighbor, and Vincent Price.—T.R. (Cinema Village; July 9.)

Wise Blood (1980)—John Huston's faithful adherence to the text and flavor of Flannery O'Connor's first novel (it was published in 1952) has resulted in a scattered, disconcerting film that has not quite made up its mind whether it wants to be a movie or a literary reading. The picture works in the end, against all odds, because of its wild, strange humor and its sympathy for the rigors of home-fried Christian passion. Brad Dourif is painfully convincing as the black-hatted, Jesus-haunted prophet Hazel Motes, and Daniel Schor, Ned Beatty, Amy Wright, Harry Dean Stanton, and Mary Nell Santacroce are also funny and heartbreaking by turns as they pursue their lonely paths of scam and vision in the back alleys of our gothic South.—R.A. (Cinema Village; starting July 12.)

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her long-time live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. Cinematography by José Luis Alcaine. In Spanish.—P.K. (11/14/88) (Cinema Studio.)

School of American Ballet student performance: Merrill Ashley. Copyright:Martha Swope, 1967.

Thanks to the Library, American dance has taken great leaps forward.

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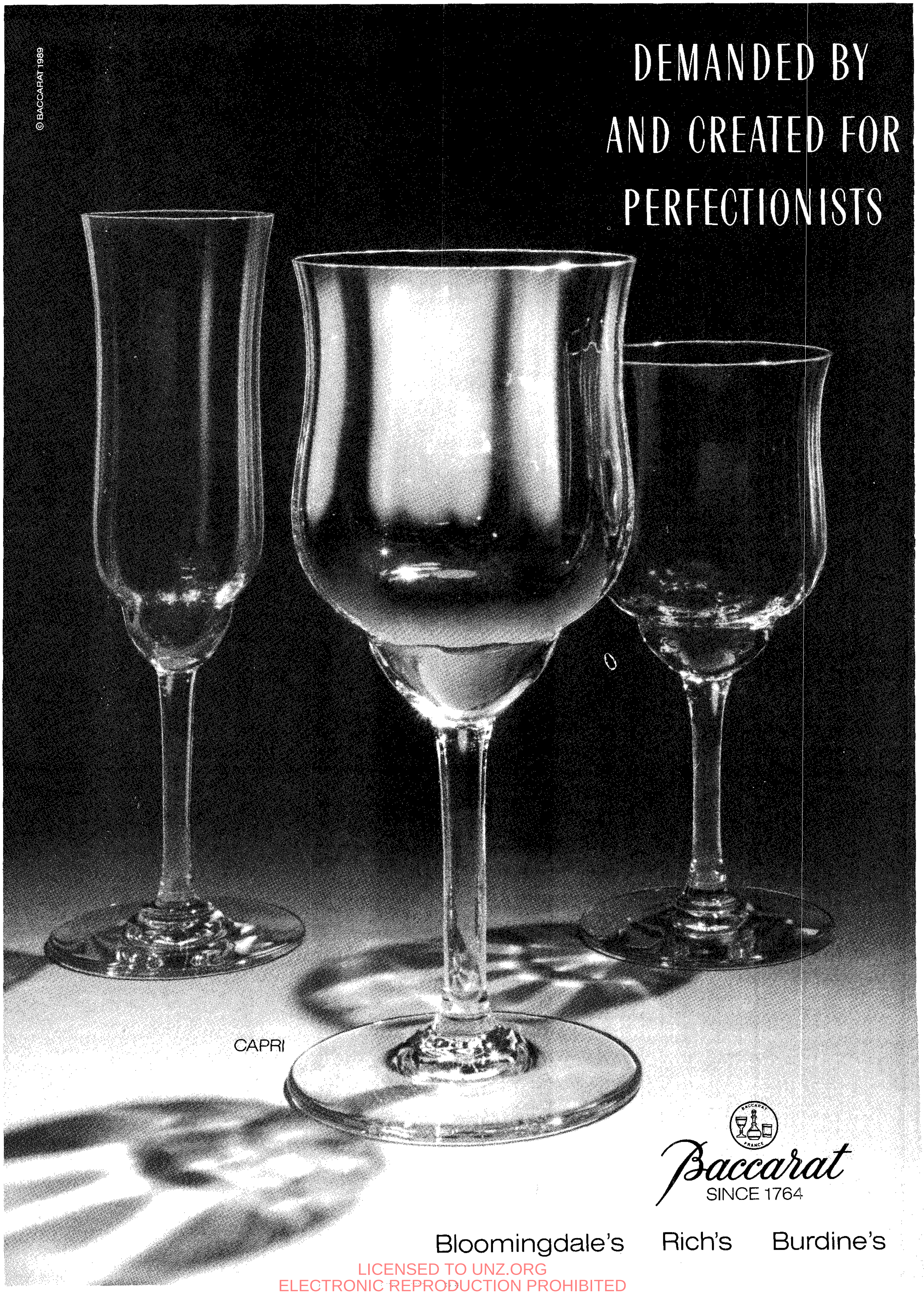
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THE NEW YORKER

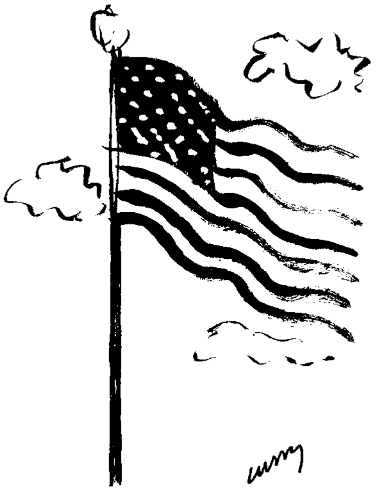
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

LETTER from a man we know: When I was a lot younger (I'll turn seventy next year: can't believe it), there were fewer stars in the flag and a lot fewer flags in sight. Courthouses, department stores, hotels, and summer camps flew Old Glory—one each, on the whole—but not gas stations, movie theatres, shopping malls (we didn't have any), roadside vegetable stands, dry cleaners, garbage trucks, or the moon. We sang the anthem less often but perhaps with more feeling, for that reason. We didn't sing it before ballgames, for instance—that came along during the Second World War, I believe. (When we did stand up and sing, what we sang was "My Country 'Tis of Thee," not "The Star-Spangled Banner.") I can't help noticing that the standing and sometimes singing crowds at the ballpark nowadays always include some men and boys who have forgotten to take their caps off during the anthem. This irritates me, but not for patriotic reasons: I don't like inattention, which is what you get when everybody's doing something without much meaning.

I think we noticed flags more when I was younger, because there weren't so many of them. They turned up everywhere, of course, on Memorial Day, and before and during the Fourth of July; it was nice to see them—on front porches, in kids' hands, on bicycle handlebars, near fireworks stands, and in parades—and their festive presence sometimes made you think for a couple of seconds about what the holiday stood for and maybe what the flags stood for.

I can also remember times in my life when our country—its future and everything it stood for—seemed to be in terrible danger. But I can't recall ever feeling that our *flag* was imperilled; at those times, the flag almost seemed to mean less, rather than more. I served in the Air Force for three and a half years in the Second World War, most of that time out in the Pacific theatre, and I guess I was within sight of an American flag nearly every day then. I came to like the retreat ceremony (whenever there was time to hold one), when everybody on the base stopped and stood at attention and saluted while taps was sounded and the flag was lowered; the moment made you feel calm, and sometimes it reminded you of home, or even of why you were there, far away from home. Some of the friends I stood next to during one retreat or another didn't make it back from that war, but I imagine their feelings about the flag were just about the same as mine. I can't be sure, though, because we never talked about it. Most of all, those feelings were private; you could make the flag stand for whatever seemed appropriate, in your mind, or you could just stand there and think about nothing at all. That privacy, that little space in time that you had to yourself, was almost the best part for me, because the whole idea about the flag—about patriotism, if you will—is that you can decide for yourself what it stands for, what it means. In this country, you can.



When I was younger, you saw more street orators than you do today: I guess there are fewer now because everybody has decided that if you can't say something on television it's hardly worth saying at all. But back then you'd see a man come along carrying a grocery carton and an armful of pamphlets. He'd stop and climb up on the crate, and before he began speaking he'd unroll an American flag and attach it to a stick next to him on the crate or drape it on another box, which he'd put up on end to make a rostrum. Then he'd start his spiel—for vegetarianism, for Radical Syndicalism, for Prohibition or against Prohibition, for the Farmer-Labor movement, for Father Coughlin, for Bolshevism or Trotskyism, for anarchy (for no flags, that is), for God and country, whatever. Listening to him, I'd smile a little to myself about the presence of that flag beside him, because it stood for freedom, right there and then. It was his flag and mine, but he was using it for his own private purposes, which often turned out to include his wish to end our system of things as quickly as possible. I could see that the flag was part of his act; he hoped to win me over to his line of thinking simply because we both stood under, or alongside, the Red, White, and Blue. I was never swayed by such a trifling subterfuge; I don't think anybody was. Yet it never occurred to me to think that the speaker was abusing the flag by wrapping himself up in it that way, no matter how much I scorned his message, for that was one of the flag's purposes, after all. It was a symbol.

The Supreme Court said some of

this the other day (almost in fewer words), when it affirmed Gregory Lee Johnson's right to burn the flag if he so desired, because the act was protected under the First Amendment. I think the Court was saying what I've been trying to get at here: that the flag is a symbol not of something simple but of something complicated, and that its uses can be various—even wildly so or infuriatingly so, to some of us—because they are private in the end. Now President Bush wants to amend the Constitution to make flag-burning illegal. He wants the flag to stand for one thing, or just a few things, and he wants our feelings about it to be public and dutiful instead of private and free. He wants the cheerful old workaday symbol declared an icon. But I suspect that most people in this country never really think about the flag at all, because it's already so public that it's just about used up. It belongs to advertisers and politicians and public patriots (including the President, the designated patriot), and what's being burned up now is me, because I once thought it was mine.

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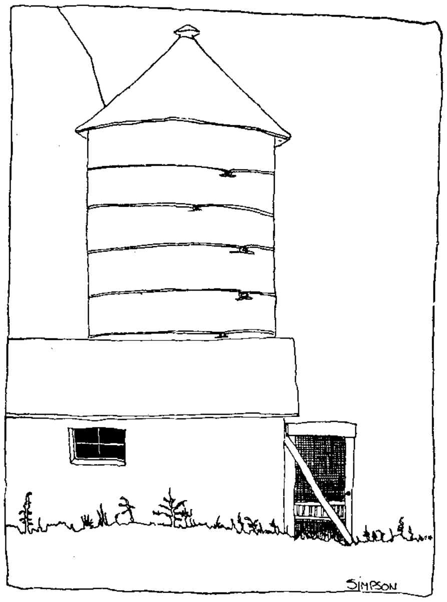
Bus Stop

WHEN we heard the other day that a couple of buses were going to be blessed on behalf of the School of American Ballet, we walked over to the Juilliard School, at Broadway and Sixty-sixth Street, where S.A.B. is housed, to observe the ceremony. This blessing would be part of dance history, for the buses were to carry sixty-seven advanced S.A.B. students and fifteen teachers and staff members to Kennedy Airport, from which they were to take a plane to the Netherlands, where the students were to perform at Amsterdam's Musictheatre, as part of the annual Holland Festival. They would be the first group of S.A.B. students ever sent abroad to dance. At the Musictheatre, they would alternate performances with their counterparts from the Vaganova Academy, the school attached to Leningrad's Kirov Ballet, who were the first group of Academy students ever to be sent abroad. On the last evening, the dancers from the two schools would share the program, interleaving ballets, and end all together in a polonaise choreographed by the Soviet teacher Konstantin Sergeyev.

The alliance is full of historical irony. Before the 1917 revolution, the Vaganova Academy, known as the Imperial Theatre Ballet School of the Maryinsky Theatre, produced scores of brilliant dancers, whose names have passed into legend. After the revolution, despite civil war and bitterly hard times, it continued to turn out stars, among them some of S.A.B.'s most illustrious faculty: Alexandra Danilova, the late Felia Doubrovska, Pierre Vladimirov, and, of course, George Balanchine himself. For S.A.B., the Kirov school represents an antecedent to be prized. But it has been nearly seventy years since Balanchine left his homeland, and in that time the Soviet system of academic training, developed by Agrippina Vaganova, has also become something of a rival for S.A.B. to challenge.

Departure was set for a little after two in the afternoon. When we got there, a half hour early, nothing much was happening. The students began to show up, hauling their bags—they'd been advised not to bring wheeled suitcases, which don't do well on cobblestone streets—and milled around in the Juilliard lobby. For a large gathering of teen-agers on the eve of an exciting trip, they were remarkably self-possessed. Nearly all of them wore slacks or shorts that italicized their enviable legs—turned-out thighs, elongated muscles, and not a gram of unnecessary fat at the knee. We ran into a school administrator, Tom Schoff, who was glowing, even though he'd just learned that the plane would be delayed at Kennedy for five hours. "As soon as we get to the airport, we'll set up for class," he said. "Wait, here's Lincoln."



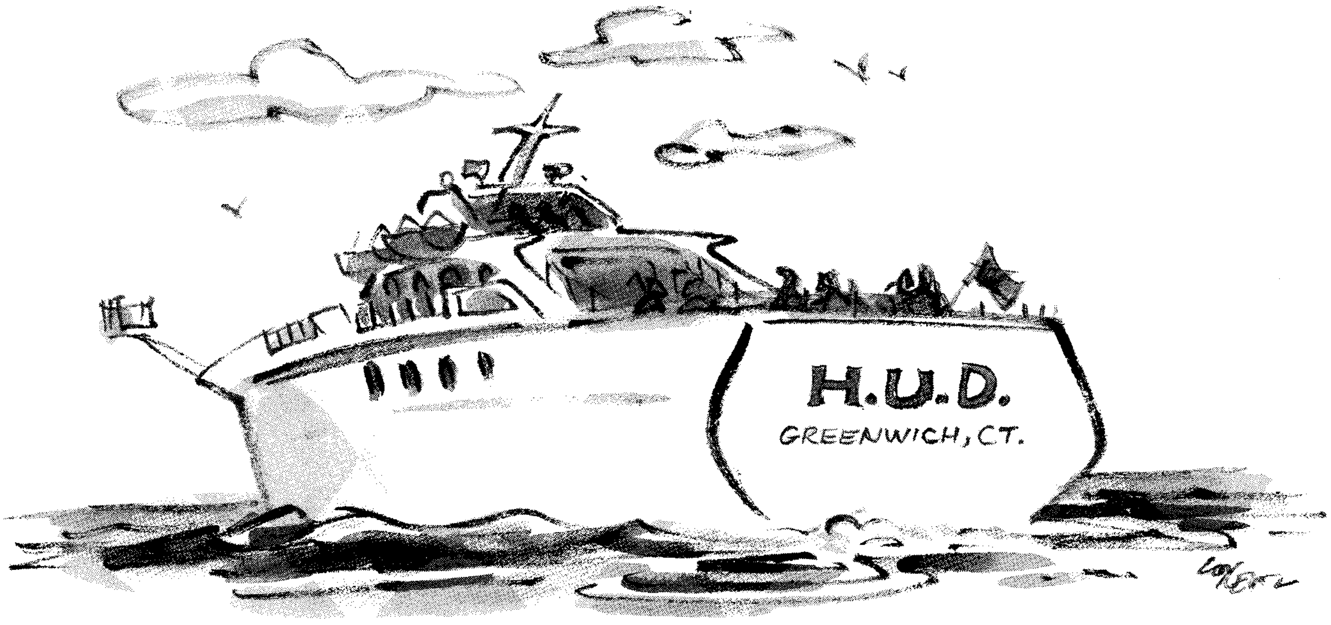
The figure of Lincoln Kirstein loomed above us. He wore his customary black suit, white shirt, sober tie, and soft oxfords. On his lapel was a small pin displaying an Orphic lyre. He was in high spirits. "Here's what I hope," he said. "I hope the plane doesn't fall down. And I hope nobody shoots Gorbachev. If that happens, the Russians will cancel. When the New York City Ballet went to Japan to perform last year, the emperor was on his deathbed. If he had died while we were there, that would have ended the tour."

We remarked that he didn't have a suitcase with him.

"I'm not going," he said. "I'm too old, and, besides, I have to take care of the school." Then he steered us over to meet Father Adrian, the Russian Orthodox priest who would give the blessing. "We used to do this all the time when the company travelled," Mr. Kirstein said. "Balanchine was very devout. Father Adrian was his priest."

We recognized Father Adrian from the promenade of the New York State Theatre, where, at intermissions, his ankle-length cassock, handsomely fitted at the waist, and his longish gray hair, tied low at the nape of his neck, make him seem at once timeless and modern, like Balanchine's ballets. He told us that he had never been to the ballet before Balanchine's death, but that since then he has become steadily acquainted with Balanchine's works. As for the blessing, that would be drawn from a special Russian Orthodox service for travellers. It reads, in part, "O Master, who commandest the elements and holdest all things in the palm of Thy hand . . . do Thou bless their path and aerial journey."

As it happened, the sidewalk on West Sixty-sixth Street, along which the buses were parked, proved too narrow for the crowd and too noisy to accommodate a blessing, so Father Adrian performed the ceremony in the lobby. He intoned the prayer, dipped a tree switch in a bowl of water, and shook it so that droplets fell in all directions. "I offer you my personal good wishes for the Holland Festival," he concluded. For a moment, the air was silent and still. Then, smiling broadly, Mr. Kirstein leaned forward like an anxious fan at the Harvard-Yale game.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"Kill 'em!" he bellowed. "Kill 'em! Kill 'em!" The dancers began to laugh, and so did he. The crowd moved out toward the buses. By two-fifteen, every soul with a suitcase was on board. By two-seventeen, the buses were out of sight.

Orchids of Hawaii

EVERY year, Nicky and Kim Mumola sell about eight and a half million tiny paper parasols suitable for decorating tropical drinks. Their company, Orchids of Hawaii, also sells fibreglass fertility wall hangings, polyethylene hula skirts in assorted colors, and ceramic mugs shaped like skulls, coconuts, the face of Fu Manchu, or Easter Island heads. Most of the Mumolas' customers buy by mail, but nearly everything in the Orchids of Hawaii catalogue is on display in a small, crowded showroom around the corner from the company's loading dock and warehouse, on Provost Avenue, in the North Bronx. Fountains gurgle in three corners of the vestibule. ("Just plug it in," the catalogue says. "Absolutely no plumbing necessary.") Streamers and fish netting hang overhead. The walls are thronged with war masks scowling like jack-o'-lanterns. Taped to the showroom door are eight-by-ten publicity photos of local Polynesian dancers and ukulele players looking for work.

We went up there to visit recently, and the Mumolas led us past ceiling-tall tiki totems and yucca-pole palm trees to a table with a lazy Susan filled with display merchandise: monkeypod bo-bo platters, chip-resistant double-dragon china, and stainless-steel compote dishes with covers. Kim, who was born in 1956—four years after her father, Tachio Uchida, a Californian of Japanese descent, started the business, on West Fifty-sixth Street, with her uncle Kei Yamato—is the family historian, and she brought out a collection of every catalogue Orchids of Hawaii ever issued. Nicky, who is from Canarsie, flipped through a stack of old photographs as Kim talked, pointing out highlights and providing commentary. He showed us pictures of their annual trip to Korea to scrutinize production of the paper parasols, which are made in homes all over the countryside, and he demonstrated how each parasol is fashioned by hand after a mechanical knife cuts out the spokes. "Inferior parasols will turn to sawdust, or they will have bugs in them," Nicky said. "We pride ourselves on the quality of our parasols. We make sure they all open." He pointed out that Orchids of Hawaii parasols are made with a little plastic bead on the stem, so they can be opened and closed repeatedly. This was Kim's father's idea. "You want a parasol that opens and closes, so you can take it home," Nicky said.

Nicky also showed us some of the specialty parasols, including parasols on Flex-Straws, Mylar parasols, and jazzy fringe burst parasols, which look like sparklers when you twirl them. In the novelty-cocktail trade, parasols are what's known as a pic, he explained, and other kinds of pics stocked by the company include windmill straws, chenille parrots on a stick, clown heads, fantail peacocks, and seven-and-a-half-inch-high palm trees with plastic fronds and a climbing monkey. The most magical-looking ones are called fan pics, and are built on a chassis that consists of two thin wooden sticks, hinged at one end. When the unattached ends are separated and the sticks are swung apart in a semicircle, a colorful fan of honeycomb tissue paper unfurls.

Orchids of Hawaii also sells drink mixes, such as Piña Colada and Passion Fruit, produced by a company in Brooklyn from secret formulas developed by a chemist in 1941. Nicky held up a bottle of Strawberry Daiquiri mix the color of a pink flamingo. "We try to keep everything natural," he said. "Like sugar—that's in there. And it's made with New York water, rated excellent by consumers." With any drink-mix order, Orchids of Hawaii includes a bartenders' guide written by Kim's father, which provides not only recipes for such drinks as a Navy Grog and a Passion Daiquiri but menu prose to match: "Potent enough to unsettle even the staunchest admiral," and "Each savory sip will bring you closer to heaven."

After parasols, Kim said, Orchids of

Hawaii’s biggest seller is plastic leis—about a million and a half per year, all manufactured by a contraption invented by her father to supply the large quantities of leis needed for the Polynesian Pavilion at the 1964 World’s Fair.

“What’s that gentleman’s name who made a machine to do nothing?” Nicky asked us.

“Rube Goldberg?” we said.

“You’ll think Herb Rhubarb made this one, too,” Nicky said in Brooklyn deadpan, and he took us into the warehouse to see the lei-maker, which is actually four different machines: a slitter, which slices and crimps lengths of colored plastic ribbon in such a way that it becomes fluffy; a winder, which coils it; a swift, which untangles it; and a stapler, which cuts and joins the ends. The lei machine keeps the same hours the Mumolas do—nine to five, Monday through Friday. In the sixties, when Polynesian restaurants were in their heyday, it turned out leis twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

“Tropical went out when ‘Star Wars’ came in,” Nicky said. “Nobody wanted tropical. They wanted chrome and glass and gray rooms.” He sensed the tide changing back again in the early eighties, he said, when he went to a men’s-apparel show at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center hoping to find a supplier of Hawaiian shirts and discovered Hawaiian shirts in nearly every aisle. “I think it’s the back-to-nature feeling,” he explained. “You see, the computer age lasted awhile, then people got tired of gray rooms.”

Sentimental Guy

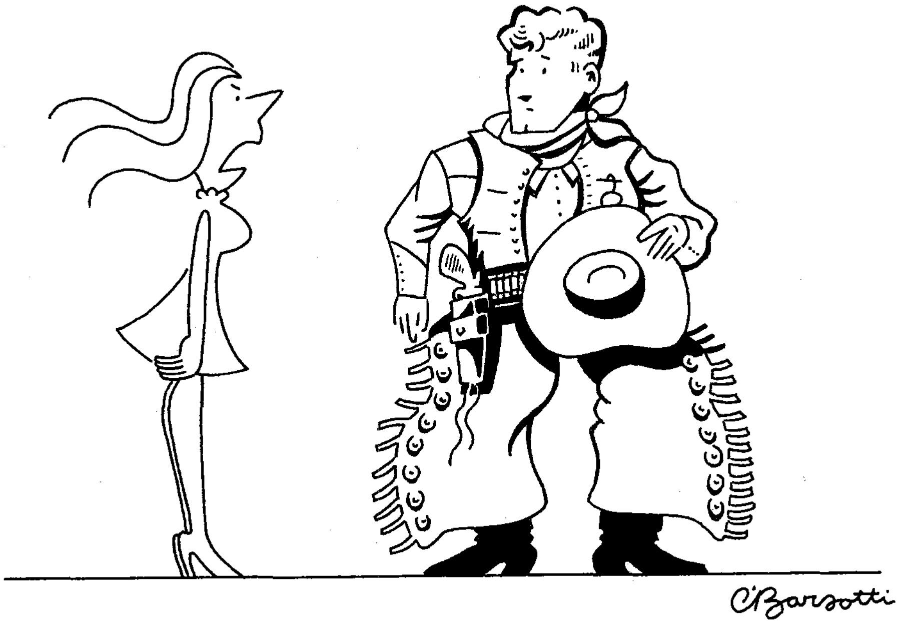
THE inspiration to celebrate Marilyn Monroe’s birthday for a whole month was something Al Guastafeste and Marty Pine came up with together. It made obvious sense. Marty Pine has not been in the public-relations business in the tri-state area for forty-seven years without figuring a few things out, such as that Marilyn Monroe is always a hot item. Marty was also not inclined to overlook the fact that 1989 marked the thirty-fifth anniversary of the four days Marilyn Monroe spent with Al Guastafeste in Korea, entertaining our troops there.

Three years ago, Marty went to a Halloween party given by a friend and client, a dentist from Canarsie who keeps a P.R. agent on the payroll because, Marty says, “he likes to be in the spotlight.” The party was held at Abbracciamento On-the-Pier, a fine-dining establishment in Jamaica Bay which has parking for thirty good-sized boats, and a linguine and white clam sauce—with clams the size of chicken gizzards—that you remember for more than a day. The upshot was that Marty met Frank Abbracciamento, the owner, and immediately picked up a new account. Soon, Marty got to know Al Guastafeste, who not long after Abbracciamento On-the-Pier opened, in 1984, had begun a regular weekend engagement there, playing piano in the bar.

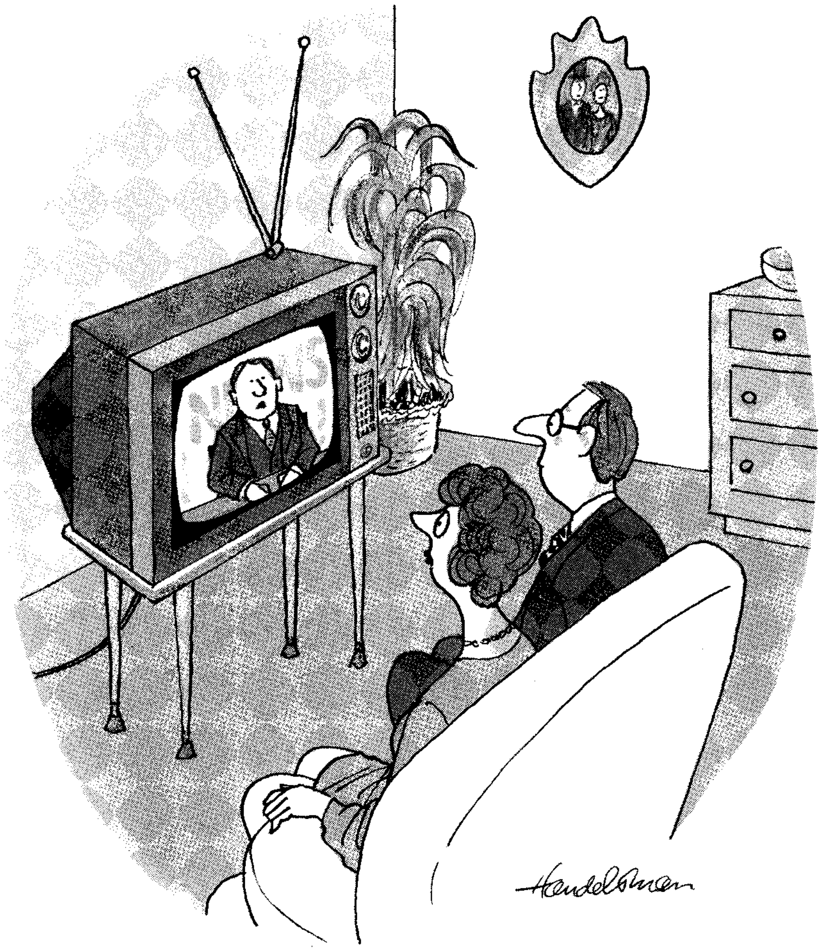
Al has two degrees from Juilliard and is quite comfortable with a classical repertoire, but when he plays at a place like Abbracciamento—he has also done a three-year gig at Lenny’s Steaks and Chops, in Howard Beach, and three years at Altadonna, in Ozone Park—he sticks mainly to show tunes and jazz standards. His pièce de résistance is “Rhapsody in Blue.” Frank Abbracciamento has said, “Al can play the hell out of ‘Rhapsody in Blue.’ ” One night not long ago, Al got so involved with the climactic crescendos of “Rhapsody in Blue” that Frank found himself wondering whether the noise from the piano might not be interfering with his patrons’ dining pleasure. He was seriously considering asking Al, in a polite way, never to play “Rhapsody in Blue” again, but then Al finished the piece and twenty people at the bar gave him a standing ovation, so Frank never said a word.

Al will come right out and tell you, “I’m a sentimental guy.” Whenever he played at Abbracciamento, he brought along his scrapbook and rested it atop the piano, for easy reference. The scrapbook contained mementos from many highlights in Al’s life, with an emphasis on the 1954 tour of Korea with Marilyn Monroe. Occasionally, Al would play a composition of his own called “Here’s to Marilyn,” and if anyone expressed particular interest about the origins of this song he would graciously allow that person to look through the scrapbook.

Marilyn Monroe was born on June 1, 1926. In May of this year, Marty issued a press release about Al Guastafeste. Its headline said “MARILYN MONROE’S PIANIST CELEBRATES HER BIRTHDAY IN JUNE.” What Marty did not see coming when he issued this release was that Al was about to take an indefinite leave of absence from Abbracciamento On-the-Pier. This came about because a couple of months ago Frank Abbracciamento went to dinner at Asti’s, the Greenwich Village institution where opera is more important than the food. At Asti’s, Frank heard a soprano and a tenor who really impressed him, and he invited them to sing at Abbracciamento’s. The idea was for them to perform every third Friday—a little opera, plus whatever else they felt like. That sounded fine to



“Any trail—just find one and hit it.”



"This will surely be disappointing to many meek people. The legacy has been successfully contested, and it is now the arrogant who are to inherit the earth."

• •

Al, until he learned that Frank expected him to accompany the singers but did not intend to pay him extra for this labor. Al has described the conversations that ensued as "a professional disagreement." Frank says, "One spoke in the wheel started to bend. It's just an unfortunate situation."

The unfortunate result was that anyone who went to Abbracciamento On-the-Pier last month anticipating an evening with Al Guastafeste found himself listening to a new pianist, Floyd Sharp. To hear Al reminisce about Marilyn Monroe, you had to do what we did—call him on the phone and make a date to meet him at his daytime job site, at John Dewey High School, in Bath Beach, where he has taught music for twenty years.

In 1954, Al was music director of the Army Forces Far East Command Special Services Office. Two helicopters full of reporters followed Marilyn Monroe on her Korea tour, so Al's scrapbook, which he wasted no time in sharing with us, contains plenty of press clippings. One Wirephoto shows Marilyn in a spaghetti-strap black evening dress, with a microphone, and Al at the keyboard in the background—a relaxed and pleasant-looking man who thirty-five years ago had hair that was more plentiful and less gray than it now is. The papers did a nice job titillating, even though Marilyn Monroe had recently married Joe DiMaggio and Al was engaged to Josephine Domanico, now his wife of thirty-three years. "It's just platonic between us," Al told one reporter. "After all, I'm getting married when I get home, and she's got the Jolter." At the end of the tour, the *Journal-American* wrote, "Long Island's luckiest G.I., who was right behind Marilyn Monroe tickling the ivories, yesterday kissed goodbye to the softest touch in the world as the buxom star ended her four-day tour in Korea."

The scrapbook also contains sheet music for "Here's to Marilyn" and a song called "Abbracciamento On-the-Pier." Al explained that these represent only a fraction of his original compositions. "I have the knack, no matter what situation I'm in, I can write a song about it," he said. "I was a captain with the auxiliary police, so I wrote an auxiliary-police march. When I taught at a parochial school, I wrote an Ave Maria. When I was with a junior high school, I wrote a song about the junior high. I wrote a song about John Dewey High School. It's called 'We Do at Dewey.' When Marty Pine suggested that I write a song about Abbracciamento On-the-Pier, I thought about it, and an hour later I called back and said I had the tune. Marty asked what took me so long."

The conversation returned to Marilyn Monroe.

"People didn't understand her—not that *I* understood—but she really was an ordinary gal," Al said. "She really was. She had a voice—if you want to talk about quality, the best way to describe it, I would say, is that you were *convinced* by what she sang. Along with her movements, which were very important to her. Take 'Somebody Loves Me'—the way she let it ooze out, the soldiers loved it. I told her she didn't even have to sing. She was a terrific person. I had no problems whatsoever. This was the biggest thrill of her life, doing those shows in Korea, because they were spontaneous. She once forgot the words to 'Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend.' I can vividly recall it. She leaned over and said, 'What am I gonna do? I forgot the words.' I told her, 'Relax, don't worry, they love you. I'll give you a new introduction. We'll take it from the top.' Plus, while she's bent down, with her arm around me, the views from the audience weren't so bad."

On the desk next to the scrapbook was the manuscript of Al Guastafeste's not yet published memoir, "A Different View of Marilyn." It is hefty—three hundred and fifty-one pages that, in Al's words, recount the progress of his own life and Marilyn Monroe's life "in a parallel way, as a comparison of our life styles." It is dedicated to his wife and his parents, and to "Marilyn Monroe, without whom I could not have 'A Different View of Marilyn.' "

ACCIDENT

My mother's boyfriend picked me up from school the day after my best friend, Jerry Weaver, was killed in a car accident east of the Superstition Mountains. It had been raining, and his car crashed through a guardrail.

I waited for Mike Russell outside, on the steps. Football practice was going on in the field next to the school, and I watched the coach running up and down, yelling. The coach was also our shop teacher. I hadn't gotten along with him since the day Jerry and I made wooden penises on the lathe. We started what was, in the coach's words, "a rash of dick-making." For a few days fifteen or twenty people walked around school with wooden penises sticking out of their pants.

"Check this out," Mike said as I got into his pickup. He handed me a small, light-blue velvet box. Inside was a diamond ring. "I know the timing's bad," he said, "but I had to pick it up today, because the final installment was due."

"She doesn't want to get married," I said. I handed the box back to Mike. "It's nice, though," I added.

He pulled away from the curb and into the traffic. He said, "I know she doesn't, but sometimes people don't know what they want. Anyway, Brent, I'm optimistic, and I love your mom a lot."

As I was listening to him, I was watching something happening in the other lane of traffic. "See that kid on the skateboard?" I said. "He skated right into the street without looking, and that red Mustang had to swerve to keep from hitting him."

Mike had seen it, too. He pulled the truck over and got out and walked over to the boy, who looked as though he was nine or ten. Mike, who was tall and muscular, was almost twice his size. I had my window open, but Mike was talking too quietly for me to hear him. He was motioning to the next corner, where there was a stoplight. After a few minutes he got back into the truck, and the boy skated into the street again. "Well, I really scared him," Mike said. "I told him I knew his father."

"What did he say?" I asked.

Mike started the truck. "That his father lived in Florida," he said.

When we got home, my mother was sitting in a lawn chair on our concrete porch. She was still in her nurse's uniform, except for her shoes, which she had kicked off into the grass. She was the supervisor of the intensive-care unit of a hospital in Phoenix. "I think I was asleep," she said. "What time is it?"

"Four-thirty," Mike said.

I picked up her shoes and lined them up on the porch, next to the door. "Some kids didn't come to school today, Mom, because of Jerry," I said. "Tim and Danny both stayed home."

"I didn't want you here by yourself," my mother said. "I didn't want you doing nothing but thinking about it all day."

"That's what I did anyway," I told her. "I couldn't concentrate on anything at school."

"Still, you were around other people," she said. "What are you doing?" she said to Mike, who was standing behind her chair and lifting her hair up from her shoulders.

"I'm going to rub your neck," he said.

"How come men always think they can do whatever they feel like doing?" she said. "Without even asking the other person."

"O.K., forget it," Mike said.

"I'm in a bad mood," my mother told him. "Leave me alone for a while."

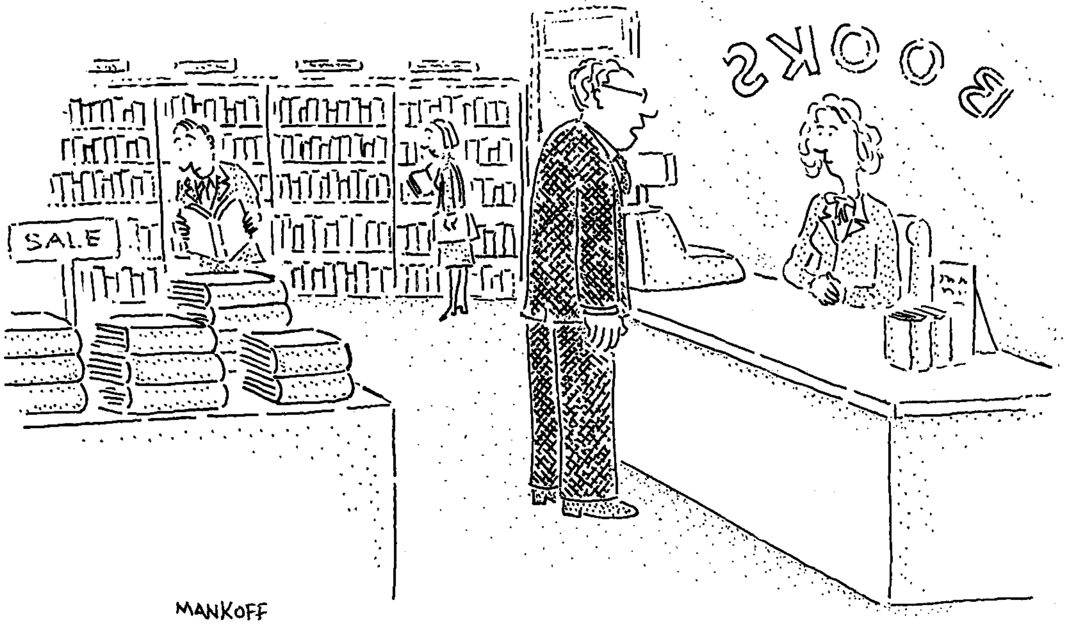
Mike and I went into the house and made ourselves sandwiches. He had been going out with my mother for two years. He had a house in New River, which was twenty miles north of where we lived, but he stayed with us most of the time—he owned an auto body shop near us. Over the past two years he had taken my friends and me dirt-bike riding in the desert, and on camping trips to Saguaro Lake.

"I guess this isn't the day to give Mom the ring," I told him.

He was standing at the counter, making a cup of instant coffee. "It doesn't look like it, does it?" he said.

After I finished, I put my plate and glass in the sink and went out the back door. Mike came out a few minutes later. I was standing next to the carport. "A Gila monster," I told him quietly, pointing to a black-and-yellow lizard on a rock. "I can't tell if it's dead or asleep."

"Step on it," Mike said. "That was a joke, Brent," he told me, when I didn't laugh. He stamped his foot on the ground, and we watched the lizard dart over the rock and into the carport.



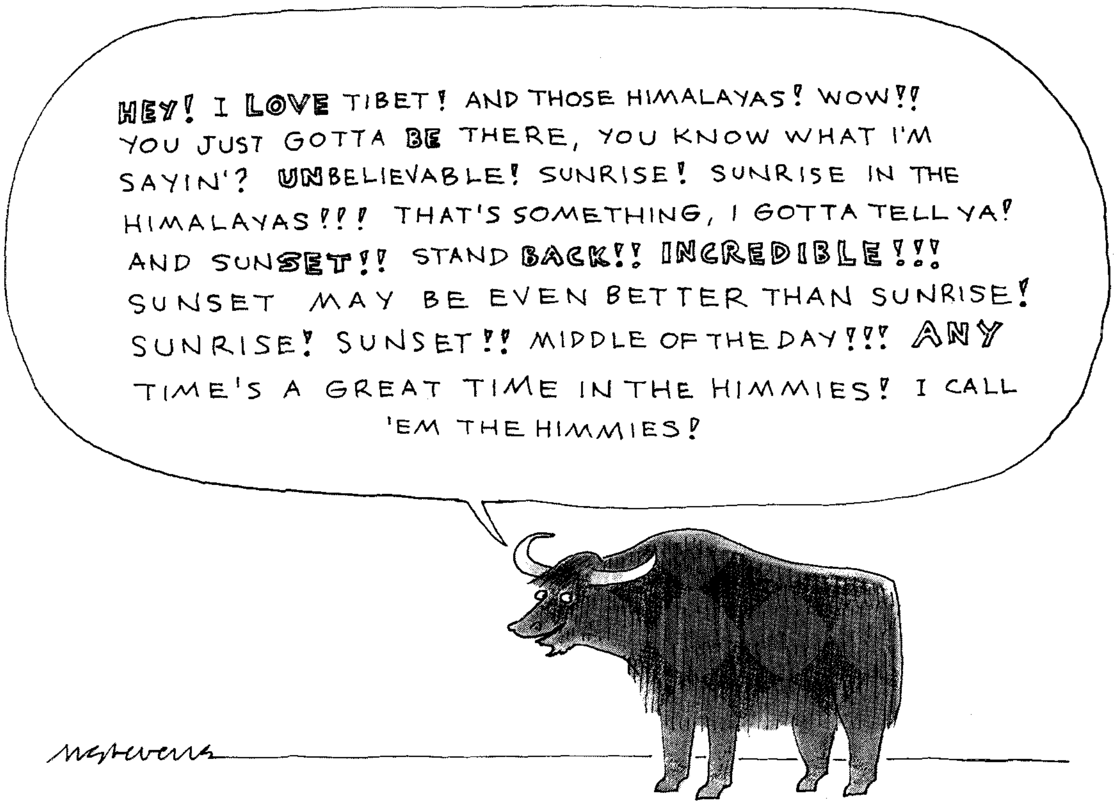
"Do you have 'The Oxford Companion to Real Estate'?"

"You hardly ever get to see Gila monsters," I said. "Maybe it's a sign that something else is going to happen—some other bad thing."

"Don't start thinking you can predict things," Mike said. "Don't fool yourself like that."

Next door, our neighbor came out of his house and lit his charcoal grill. He waved to us. The sun was setting and the air was suddenly cooler. There was a band of pink sky just above the desert.

"You should put on a jacket," Mike said before going into the house.


HEY! I LOVE TIBET! AND THOSE HIMALAYAS! WOW!! YOU JUST GOTTA BE THERE, YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYIN'? UNBELIEVABLE! SUNRISE! SUNRISE IN THE HIMALAYAS!!! THAT'S SOMETHING, I GOTTA TELL YA! AND SUNSET!! STAND BACK!! INCREDIBLE!!! SUNSET MAY BE EVEN BETTER THAN SUNRISE! SUNRISE! SUNSET!! MIDDLE OF THE DAY!!! ANY TIME'S A GREAT TIME IN THE HIMMIES! I CALL 'EM THE HIMMIES!

YAKETY-YAK

THE three of us went out that night for dinner. I had wanted to stay home, but my mother said that if I didn't go they wouldn't go. We went to a restaurant in Carefree. We hadn't made reservations and there were a lot of people ahead of us, so we sat outside on the patio. The moon was rising and the stars were beginning to appear.

Mike and my mother drank beer and I drank 7UP. There was entertainment—a man in a Western outfit playing the piano, and an older, overweight woman in a green shimmering dress singing songs like "Frankie and Johnnie." She had a green feather stole, and as she sang she wandered over to various men at the tables and draped the stole over their shoulders and sat in their laps. She brushed the stole over Mike's head on her way back to the piano, and my mother fixed his hair for him, smoothing it back from his face.

When we finally got a table, it was almost ten. We ordered dinner, and my mother switched to rum-and-Coke. She had already had three beers. "Are you sure you want that?" Mike said when the waitress brought her the drink.

"I'm positive. I want to forget about everything," she said. She reached over and smoothed my hair in the same way she had smoothed Mike's.

"Don't," I told her.

"O.K.," she said. "I'm sorry."

"I have an announcement to make," Mike said. "What the hell. I may as well do this now." He took the velvet box out of his pocket and put it on the table in front of my mother. "I bought you a ring," he said. He took it out of the box and put it on her finger. "It looks great on you, doesn't it? Like it really belongs there."

My mother looked at me and then at Mike. Her face was white. "I think I might have to vomit," she said, and put her head down on the table. After a few minutes she sat back up. "No, I'm O.K.," she said. "Rum always makes me sick."

Mike looked a little sick himself. He ordered tea for my mother, and when she started to take off the ring he placed his hands over hers. "I won't ask you yes or no yet," he said. "I don't want to hear no. So we'll just eat dinner and have a normal conversation. What should we talk about?"

"Let's talk about how crazy you are," my mother told him.

Our food came, and after we ate dinner Mike asked me if I'd mind if he and my mother danced. In addition to the entertainment on the patio, there was a band in the back of the room and a small dance floor. "Go ahead," I said. They got up and danced to a slow song. Afterward they came back to the table. Just as they were about to sit down, a man in a denim jacket, who was walking quickly toward the door, knocked into them and didn't apologize.

"Don't," my mother said, when she saw the expression on Mike's face. "You don't know why he did that. For all you know, he may have just found out some bad news and is hurrying home or to a hospital or someplace."

She was crying, and Mike paid the bill and we went outside and sat on the bumper of his pickup. Mike and I each had an arm around her. The moon was higher in the sky, and bright enough for me to see a glimmer of light from the ring when she lifted her hand to wipe the tears from her face. Mike was looking at the ring, too. He caught my mother's hand as she was bringing it back down into her lap. "If Jerry had been lucky," he said, "this is how the moon would have been shining on the guardrail he couldn't see."

—JUDY TROY

WHAT A SKY

THE clouds—dark, massed and purposeful—raced across the sky. At one moment a gap appeared, a vault of blue so deep it looked like a cavity into which one could vanish, but soon the clouds swept across it like trailing curtains, removing it from sight. There were showers on and off—heavy showers—and in some fields the water had lodged in shallow pools where the cows stood impassively, gaping. The crows were incorrigible. Being inside the car, she could not actually hear their cawing, but she knew it very well and remembered how long ago she used to listen and try to decipher whether it denoted death or something less catastrophic.

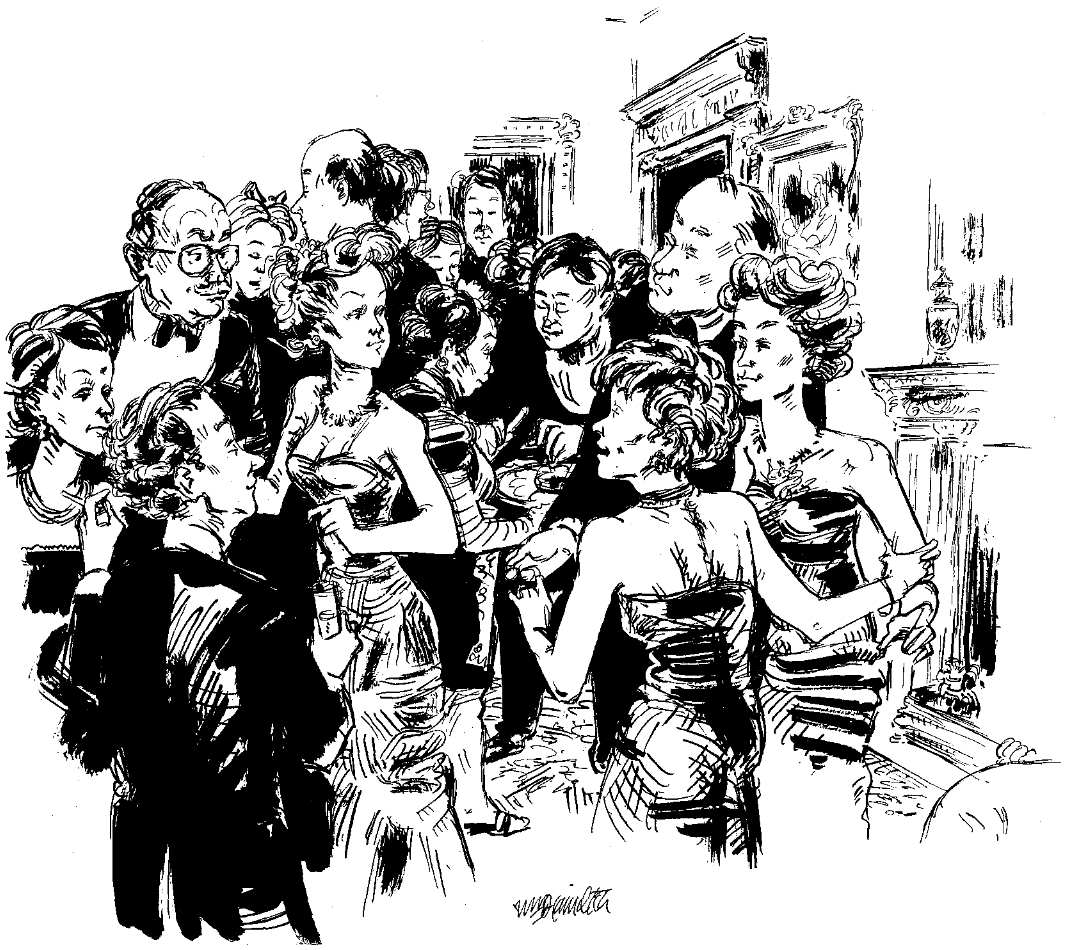
As she mounted the granite steps of the nursing home, her face, of its own accord, folded into a false, obedient smile. A few old people sat in the hall, one woman praying on her big black horn rosary beads and a man staring listlessly through the long rain-splashed window, muttering, as if by his mutters he could will a visitor, or maybe the priest to give him the last rites. One of the women tells her that her father has been looking forward to her visit and that he has come to the front door several times. This makes her quake, and she digs her fingernails into her palms for fortitude. As she crosses the threshold of his little bedroom, the first question he fires at her is "What kept you?," and very politely she explains that the car ordered to fetch her from her hotel was a little late in arriving.

"I was expecting you two hours ago," he says. His mood is foul and his hair is standing on end, tufts of gray hair sprouting like Lucifer's.

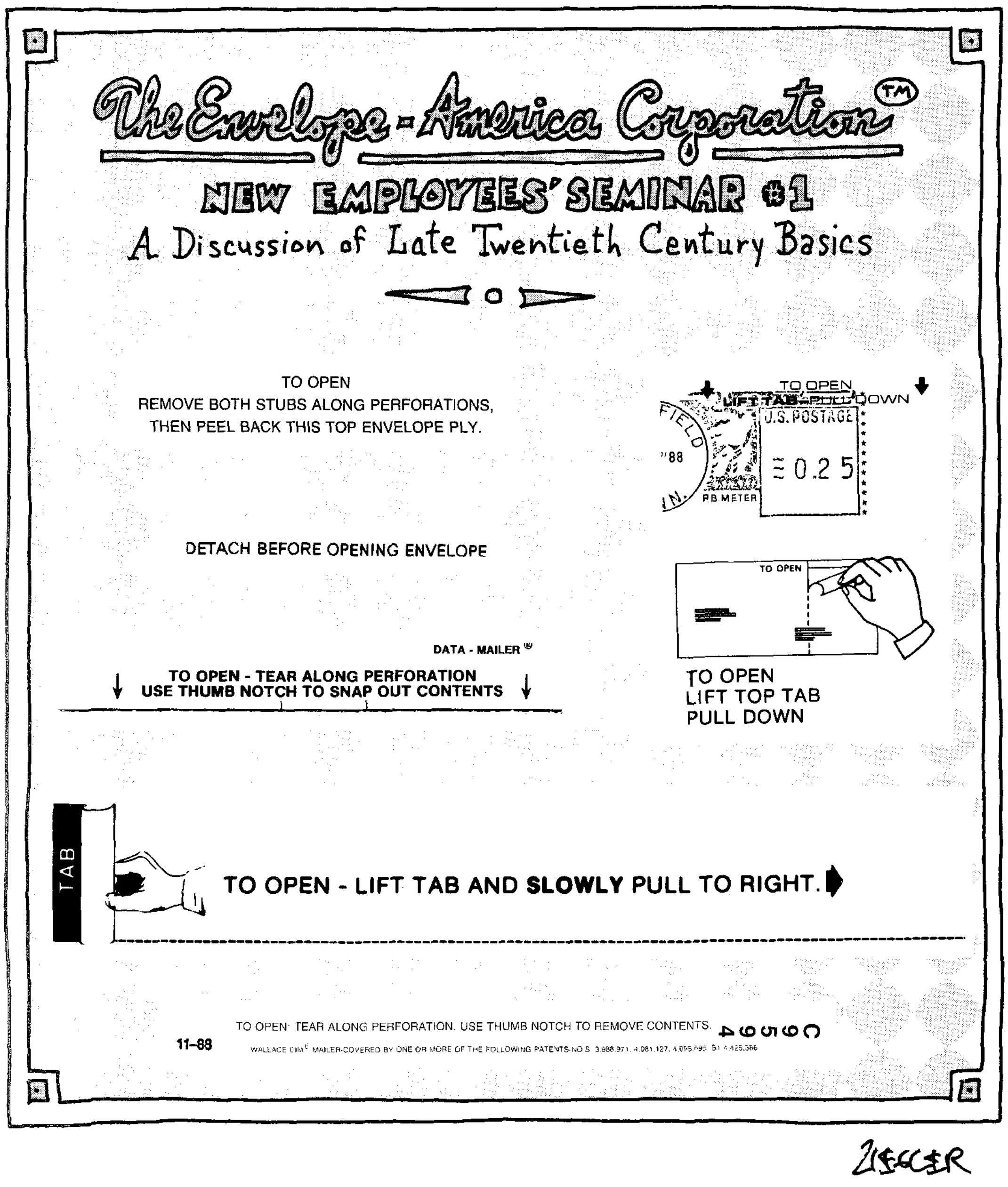
"How are you?" she says.

He tells her that he is terrible and complains of a pain in the back from the shoulder down, a pain like the stab of a knife. She asks if it is rheumatism. He says how would he know, but, whatever it is, it is shocking, and to emphasize his discomfort he opens his mouth and lets out a groan. The first few minutes are taken up with showing him the presents that she has brought, but he is too disgruntled to appreciate them. She coaxes him to try on the pullover, but he won't. Suddenly he gets out of bed and goes to the lavatory. The lavatory adjoins the bedroom; it is merely a cupboard with fittings and fixtures. She sits in the overheated bedroom listening, while trying not to listen. She stares out of the opened window; the view is of a swamp, while above, in a pale untrammelled bit of whey-colored sky, the crows are flying at different altitudes and cawing mercilessly. They are so jet they look silken, and listening to them, while trying not to listen to her father, she thinks that if he closes the lavatory door perhaps all will not be so awful; but he will not close the lavatory door and he will not apologize. He comes out with his pajamas streeling around his legs, his walk impaired as he goes toward the bed, across which his lunch tray has been slung. His legs like candles, white and spindly, foreshadow her own old age, and she wonders with a shudder if she will end up in a place like this.

"Wash your hands, Dad," she says as he strips the bedcovers back. There is a second's balk as he looks at her, and the look has the dehumanized rage of a trapped animal, but for some reason he concedes and crosses to the little basin and gives his hands, or rather his right hand, a cursory splash. He dries it by laying the hand on the towel that hangs at the side of the basin. It is a towel that she recognizes from home—dark blue with orange splashes. Even this simple recollection pierces: she can smell the towel, she can remember it drying on top of the range, she can feel it without touching it. The towel, like every other item in that embattled house, has got inside her brain and remained there like furniture inside a room. The white cyclamen that she has brought is



"Nan and Gordon are from California, but Northern California."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staring at her, the flowers like butterflies and the tiny buds like pencil tips, and it is this she obliges herself to see in order to generate a little cheerfulness.

"I spent Christmas Day all by myself."

"No, Dad, you didn't," she says, and reminds him that a relative came and took him out to lunch.

"I tell you, I spent Christmas Day all by myself," he says, and now it is her turn to bristle.

"You were with Agatha. Remember?" she says.

"What do you know about it?" he says, staring at her, and she looks away, blaming herself for having lost control. He follows her with those eyes, then raises his hands up like a suppliant. One hand is raw and red. "Eczema," he says almost proudly. The other hand is knobbly, the fingers bunched together like forked twigs. He says he got that affliction from foddering cattle winter after winter. Then he tells her to go to the wardrobe. There are three dark suits, some tweed jackets, and a hideous light-blue gabardine that a young nun made him buy before he went on holiday to a convent in New Mexico. He praises this young nun, Sister Declan, praises her good humor, her buoyant spirit, her generosity, and her innate sense of sacrifice. As a young girl, it seems, this young nun preferred to sit in the kitchen with her father, devising possible hurley games, or discussing hurley games that had been, instead of gallivanting with boys. He mentions how the nun's father died suddenly, choked to death while having his tea, but he shows no sign of pity or shock, and she thinks that in some crevice of his scalding mind he believes the nun has adopted him, which perhaps she has. The young nun has recently been sent away to the same convent in New Mexico, and the daughter thinks that perhaps it was punishment, perhaps she was getting too fond of this lonely, irascible man. No knowing.

"A great girl, the best friend I ever had," he says. Wedged among the suits in the cupboard is the dark frieze coat that belongs to the bygone days, to his youth. Were she to put her hand in a pocket, she might find an old penny or a stone that he had picked up on his walks, the long walks he took to stamp out his ire. He says to look in the beige suitcase, which she does. It is already packed with belongings, summer things, and gallantly he announces that he intends to visit the young nun again, to make the journey across the sea, telling how he will probably arrive in the middle of the night, as he did before, and Sister Declan and a few of the others will be waiting inside the convent gate to give him a regal welcome.

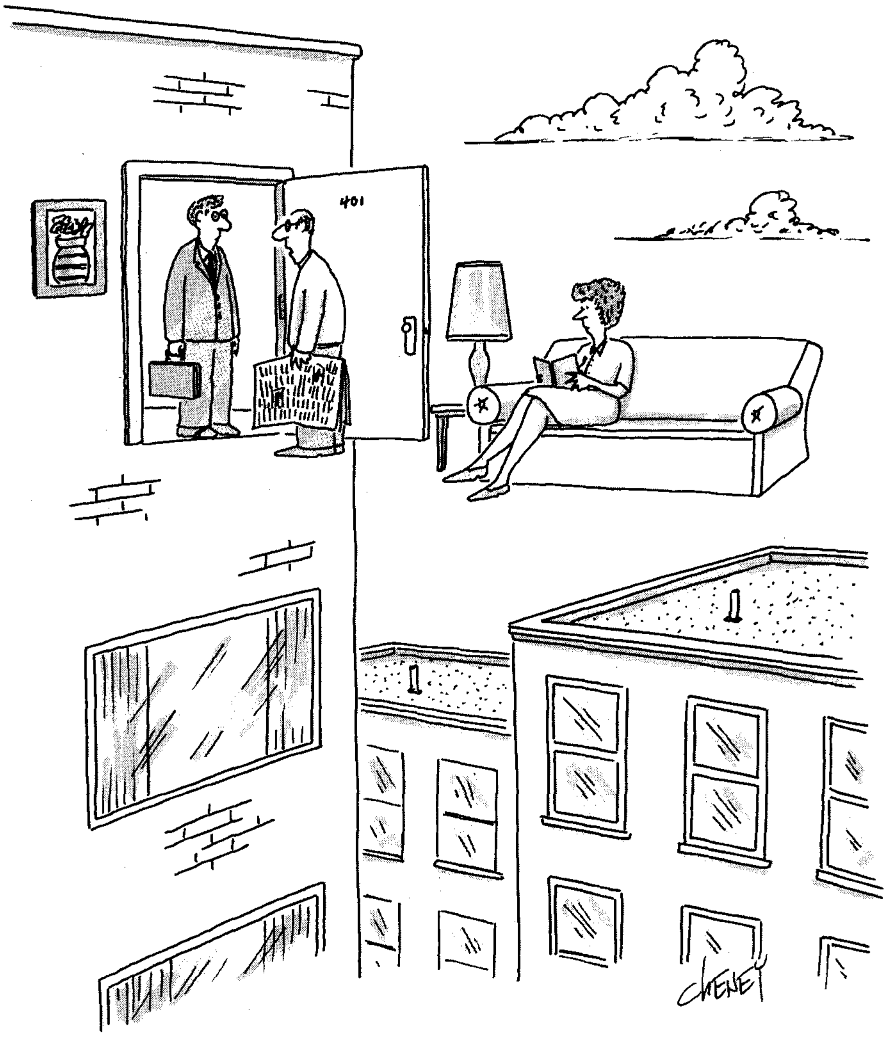
"I may not even come back," he says boastfully. On the top shelf of the wardrobe are various pairs of socks, and handkerchiefs—new handkerchiefs and torn ones—empty whiskey bottles, and two large framed photographs. He tells her to hand down one of those photographs, and for the millionth time she looks at the likeness of his mother and father. His mother seems formidable, with a topknot of curls, and a white laced bodice that even in the faded photograph looks like armor. His father, who is seated, looks meeker and more compliant. "Seven years of age when I lost my mother and father, within a month of each other," he says, and his voice is now like gravel. He grits his teeth.

What would they have made of him, his daughter wonders. Would their love have tamed him? Would he be different? Would she herself be different? "Was it very hard?" she asks, but without real tenderness.

"Hard? What are you talking about?" he says. "To be brought out into a yard and put in a pony and trap and dumped on relations?"

She knows that were she to really feel for him she would inquire about the trap, the cushion he sat on, if there was a rug for his knees, what kind of coat he wore, and the color of his hair then; but she does not ask these things. "Did they beat you?" she asks, as a form of conciliation.

"You were beaten if you deserved it," he says, and goes on to talk about their rancor and how he survived it, how he developed his independence, how he found excitement and sport in horses and was a legend even as a young lad for being able to break any horse. He remembers his boarding school and how he hated it, then his gadding days, then when still young—too young, he adds—meeting his future wife, and his daughter knows that soon he will cry, and talk of his dead wife and the marble tombstone that he erected to her memory, and that he will tell how much it cost and how much the hospital bill was, and how he never left her, or any one of the family, short of money for furniture or food. His voice is passing through me, the daughter thinks, as is his stare and his need and the upright sprouts of steel-colored hair and the over-pink plates of false teeth in a glass beer tumbler. She feels glued to the spot, feels as if she has lost her will and the use of her limbs, and thinks, This is how it has always been. Looking away to avoid his gaze, her eyes light on his slippers. They are made of felt, green and red felt; there are holes in them and she wishes that she had bought him a new pair. He says to hand him the brown envelope that is above the washbasin. The envelope contains photographs of himself taken in New Mexico. In them, he has the air of a suitor, and the pose and look that he has assumed take at least thirty years off his age.



"Thanks, but we don't need insurance of any kind."

AT that moment, one of the senior nuns comes in, welcomes her, offers her a cup of tea, and remarks on how well she looks. He says that no one looks as well as he does and proffers the photos. He recounts his visit to the States again—how the stewardesses were amazed at his age and his vitality, and how everyone danced attendance on him. The nun and the daughter exchange a look. They have a strategy. They have corresponded about it, the nun's last letter enclosing a greeting card from him, in which he begged his daughter to come. From its tone she deduced that he had changed, that he had become mollified; but he has not, he is the same, she thinks.

"Now talk to your father," the nun says, then stands there, hands folded into her wide black sleeves, while the daughter says to her father, "Why don't you eat in the dining room, Dad?"

"I don't want to eat in the dining room," he says, like a corrected child. The nun reminds him that he is alone too much, that he cries too much, that if he mingled it would do him some good.

"They're ignorant, they're ignorant people," he says of the other inmates.

"They can't all be ignorant," both the nun and the daughter say at the same moment.

"I *tell* you they're *all* ignorant!" he says, his eyes glaring.

"But you wouldn't be so lonely, Dad," his daughter says, feeling a wave of pity for him.

"Who says I'm lonely?" he says roughly, sabotaging that pity, and he lists the number of friends he has, the motorcars he has access to, the bookmakers he knows, the horse trainers that he is on first names with, and the countless houses where he is welcome at any hour of day or night throughout the year.

To cheer him up, the nun rushes out and shouts to a little girl in the pantry across the way to bring the pot of tea now and the plate of biscuits. Watching the tea being poured, he insists the cup be so full that when the milk is added it slops over onto the saucer, but he does not notice, does not care.

The city of dreams!
The city that never sleeps!
If they can make it here, they'll make it anywhere?
Shanahan

"Thank you, thank you, Sister," he says. He used not to say thank you and she wonders if perhaps Sister Declan had told him that courtesy was one way to win back the love of recalcitrant ones. He mashes the biscuits on his gums and then suddenly brightens as he remembers the night in the house of some neighbors when their dog attacked him. He had gone there to convalesce from shingles. He launches into a description of the dog, a German shepherd, and his own poor self coming down in the night to make a cup of tea, and this dog flying at him and his arm going up in self-defense, the dog mauling him, and the miracle that he was not eaten to death. He charts the three days of agony before he was brought to the hospital, the arm being set, being in a sling for two months, and the little electric saw that the county surgeon used to remove the plaster.

"My God, what I had to suffer!" he says. The nun has already left, whispering some excuse.

"Poor Dad," his daughter says. She is determined to be nice, admitting how wretched his life is, always has been.

"You have no idea," he says, as he contrasts his present abode, a dungeon, with his own lovely limestone house that is going to ruin. He recalls his fifty-odd years in that house—the comforts, the blazing fire, the mutton dinners followed by rice pudding that his wife served. She reminds him that the house belongs to his son now and then she flinches, remembering that between them, also, there is a breach.

"He's no bloody good," he says and prefers instead to linger on his incarceration here.

"No mutton here; it's all beef," he says.

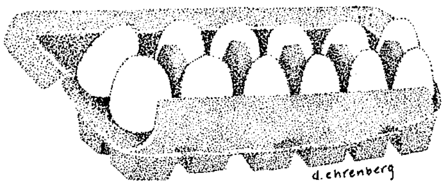
"Don't they have any sheep?" she says, stupidly.

"It's no life for a father," he says, and she realizes that he is about to ask for the guarantee that she cannot give.

She takes the tea tray and lays it on the hallway floor, then praises the kindness of nuns and of nurses and asks the name of the matron, so that she can give her a gift of money. He does not answer. In that terrible pause, as if on cue, one crow alights on a dip of barbed wire outside the window and lets out a series of hoarse exclamations. She is about to say it, about to spring the pleasant surprise. She has come to take him out for the day. That is her plan. The delay in her arrival at the nursing home was due to her calling at a splendid hotel to ask if they did lunches late. When she got here from London, late the previous night, she had stayed in a more commercial hotel in the town, where she was kept awake most of the night by the noise of cattle. It was near an abattoir, and in the very early hours of the morning she could hear the cattle arriving, their bawling, their pitiful bawling, and then their various slippings and slobberings, and the shouts of the men who got them out of the trailers or the lorries and into the pens, and then other shouts, indeterminable shouts of men. She had lain in the very warm hotel room and allowed her mind to wander back to the time when her father bought and sold cattle, driving them on foot to the town, sometimes with the help of a simpleton, often failing to sell the beasts and having to drive them home again, with the subsequent wrangling and sparring over debts. She thinks that indeed he was not cut out for a life with cattle and foddering but that he was made for grander things, and it is with a rush of pleasure that she contemplates the surprise for him. She has already vetted the hotel, admitting, it is true, a minor disappointment that the service did not seem as august as the gardens or the imposing hallway with its massive portraits and beautiful staircase. When she visited to inquire about lunch, a rather vacant young boy said that no, they did not do lunches, but that possibly they could manage sandwiches, cheese or ham. Yet the atmosphere would exhilarate him, and, sitting there in the nursing home with him now, she luxuriates in her own bit of private cheer. Has she not met someone, a man whose very voice, whose crisp manner fill her with verve and happiness? She barely knows him, but when he telephoned and imagined her surrounded by motley admirers, she did not disabuse him of his fantasy. She recalls, not without mischief, how that very morning in the market town she bought embroidered pillowcases and linen sheets, in anticipation of the day or the night when he would cross her bedroom doorway. The thought of this future tryst softens her toward the old man, her father, and for a moment the two men revolve in her thoughts like two halves of a slow-moving apparition. As for the new one, she knows why she bought pillow slips and costly sheets: because she wants her surroundings not only to be beautiful for him but to carry the vestiges of her past, such sacred things as flowers and linen, and all of a sudden, with unnerving clarity, she fears that she wants this new man to partake of her whole past—to know it in all its pain and permutations.

THE moment has come to announce the treat, to encourage her father to get up and dress, to lead him down the hallway, holding his arm protectively so that the others will see that he is cherished, then to humor him in the car, to ply him with cigarettes, and to find in the hotel the snuggest little sitting room—in short, to give him a sense of well-being, to while away a few hours. It will be a talking point with him for weeks to come, instead of the eczema or the broken arm. Something is impeding her. She wants to do it, indeed she will do it, but she keeps delaying. She tries to examine what it is that is making her stall. Is it the physical act of helping him to dress, because he will, of course, insist on being helped? No, a nun will do that. Is it the thought of his being happy that bothers her? No, it is not that; she wants with all her heart to see him happy. Is it the fear of the service in the hotel being a disappointment, sandwiches being a letdown when he would have preferred soup and a meat course? No, it is not that, since, after all, the service is not her responsibility. What she dreads is the intimacy, being with him at all. She foresees that something awful will occur. He will break down and beg her to show him the love that he knows she is withholding; then, seeing that she cannot, will not, yield, he will grow furious, they will both grow furious, there will be the most terrible showdown, a slinging match of words, curses, buried grievances, maybe even blows. Yes, she will do it in a few minutes; she will clap her hands, jump up off the chair, and in a singsong voice say, "We're late, we're late, for a very important date." She is rehearsing it, even envisaging the awkward smile that will come over his face, the melting, and his saying, "Are you sure you can afford it, darling?," while at the same moment ordering her to open the wardrobe and choose his suit.

Each time she moves in her chair to do it, something awful gets between her and the nice gesture. It is like a phobia, like someone too terrified to enter the water but standing at its edge. Yet she knows that if she were to succumb, it would not only be an afternoon's respite for him, it would be for her some enormous leap. Her heart has been hardening now for some time, and when moved to pity by something she can no longer show her feelings—all her feelings are for the privacy of her bedroom. Her heart is becoming a stone, but this gesture, this reach will soften her again and make her, if not the doting child, at least the eager young girl who brought home school reports or trophies that she had won, craving to be praised by him, this young girl who only recited the verses of "Fontenoy" in place of singing a song. He had repeatedly told her that she could not sing, that she was tone-deaf.



Outside, the clouds have begun to mass for another downpour, and she realizes that there are tears in her eyes. She bends down, pretending to tie her shoe, because she does not want him to see these tears. She saw that it was perverse not to let him partake of this crumb of emotion, but also saw that nothing would be helped by it. He did not know her; he couldn't—his own life tore at him like a mad dog. Why isn't she stirring herself? Soon she will. He is talking non-stop, animated now by the saga of his passport and how he had to get it in such a hurry for his trip to America. He tells her to fetch it from the drawer, and she does. It is very new, with only one official entry, and that in itself conveys to her more than his words ever could: the

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FLOWER FEET

(SILK SHOES IN THE WHITWORTH ART GALLERY,
MANCHESTER, ENGLAND)

Real women's feet wore these objects
that look like toys or spectacle cases stitched
from bands of coral, jade, and apricot silk
embroidered with twined sprays of flowers.
Those hearts, tongues, crescents, and disks, leather
shapes an inch across, are the soles of shoes
no wider or longer than the span of my ankle.

If the feet had been cut off and the raw stumps
thrust inside the openings, surely
it could not hurt more than broken toes, twisted
back and bandaged tight. An old woman,
leaning on a cane outside her door
in a Chinese village, smiled to tell how
she fought and cried, how when she stood on points
of pain that gnawed like fire, nurse and mother
praised her tottering walk on flower feet.
Her friends nodded, glad the times had changed.
Otherwise, they would have crippled their daughters.

—RUTH FAINLIGHT

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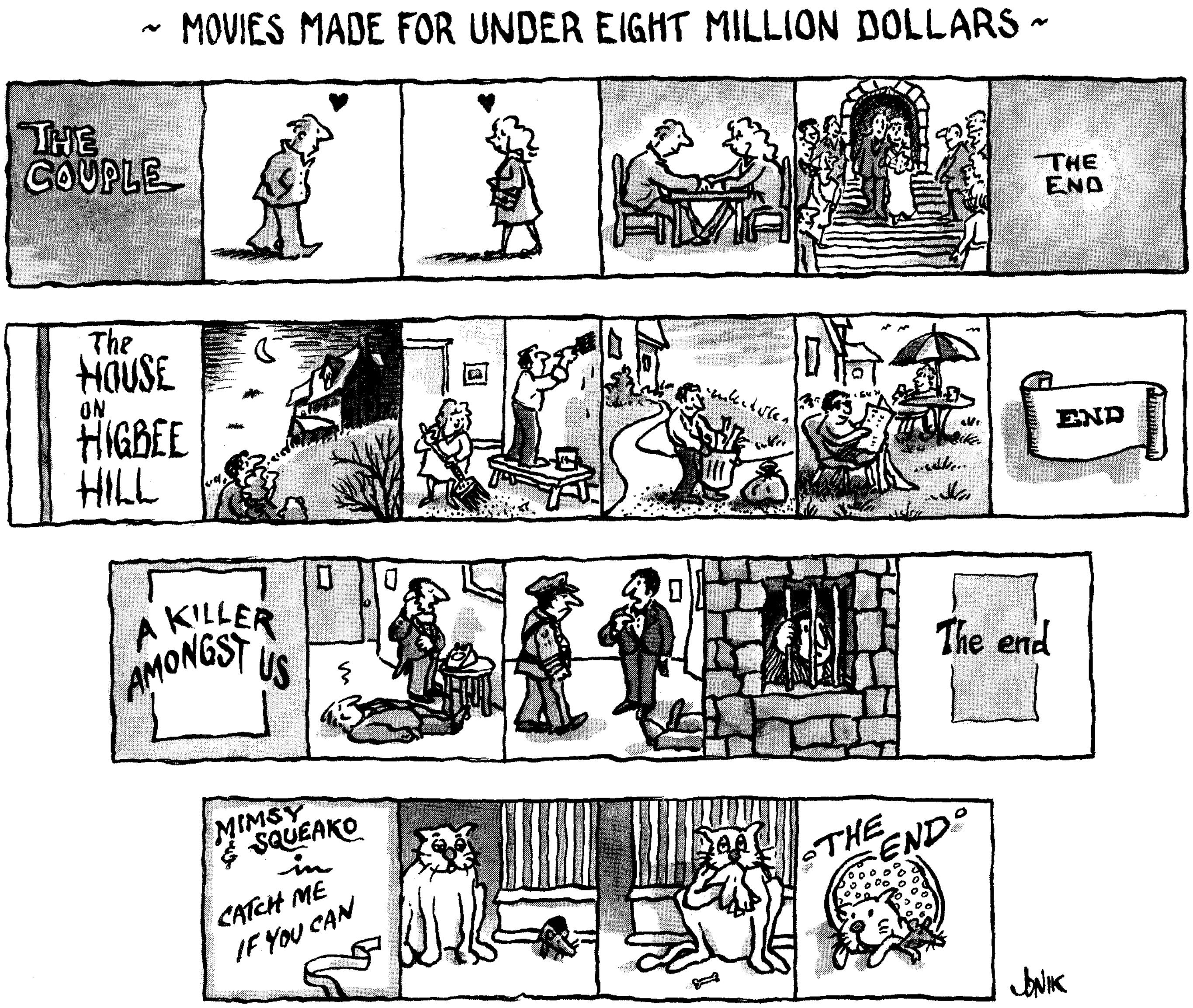

~ MOVIES MADE FOR UNDER EIGHT MILLION DOLLARS ~
THE COUPLE
THE END
The HOUSE ON HIGBEE HILL
END
A KILLER AMONGST US
The end
MIMSY & SQUEAKO in CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
THE END
JONIK

• •

paucity and barrenness of his life. He tells how the day he got that passport was the jolliest day he ever spent, how he had to go to Dublin to get it, how the nuns tut-tutted, said nobody could get a passport in that length of time because of all the red tape, but how he guaranteed that he would. He describes the wet day, one of the wettest days ever, how Biddy the hackney driver didn't even want to set out, said they would be marooned, and how he told her to stop flapping and get her coat on. He relives the drive, the very early morning, the floods, the fallen boughs, and Biddy and himself on the rocky road to Dublin, smoking fags and singing, Biddy all the while teasing him, saying that it is not a passport that he is going for but a mistress, a rendezvous.

"So you got the passport immediately," the daughter says, to ingratiate herself.

"Straightaway. I had the influence—I told the nuns here to ring the Dáil, to ring my T.D., and, by God, they did."

She asks the name of the T.D., but he has no interest in telling that, goes on to say how in the passport office a cheeky young girl asked why he was going to the States, and how he told her he was going there to dig for gold. He is now warming to his tale, and she hears again about the air journey, the nice stewardesses, the two meals that came on a little plastic tray, and about how when he stepped out he saw his name on a big placard, and later, inside the convent gate, nuns waiting to receive him.

Suddenly she knows that she cannot take him out; perhaps she will do it on the morrow, but she cannot do it now; and so she makes to rise in her chair.

He senses it, his eyes now hard like granite. "You're not leaving?" he says.

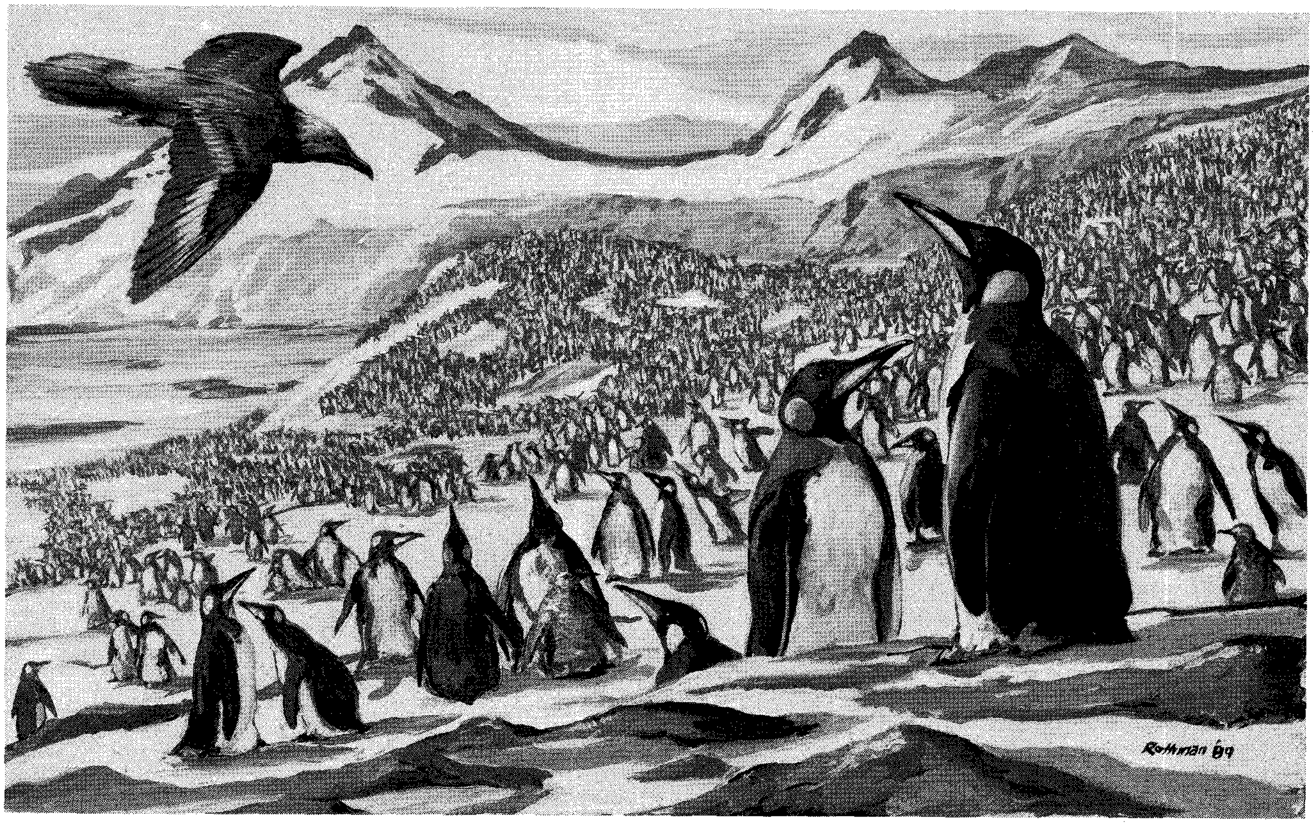
"I have to; the driver could only wait the hour," she says feebly.

He gets out of bed, says he will at least see her to the front door, but she persuades him not to. He stares at her as if he is reading her mind, as if he knows the generous impulse that she has defected on. In that moment she dislikes herself even more than she has ever disliked him. Tomorrow she will indeed visit, before leaving, and they will patch it up, but she knows that she has missed something, something incalculable, a moment of grace. The downpour has stopped and the sky, drained of cloud, is like an immense gray sieve, sieving a greater grayness. As she rises to leave, she feels that her heart is in shreds, all over the room. She has left it in his keeping, but he is wildly, helplessly looking for his own.

—EDNA O'BRIEN

A REPORTER AT LARGE

PENGUINS



OVER San Diego, a sky as smooth as blue silk stretches to the horizon. The Pacific Ocean keeps bashing its brains out on the coast. The air feels hot and thick as you inhale. It is spring in Southern California, and at Sea World the male turtles busily court the females by swimming straight up to them, staring them in the face, and waving their feet in a come-to-me gesture. Flamboyant, stilty flamingos have already built volcano-shaped nests for their young, using their beaks as trowels. My destination, behind the Penguin Encounter, is an old prefab freezer with a heavy door that opens like a meat locker. Just inside, in a cramped cloakroom, green medical clothes hang from pegs, a row of black rubber boots stands below them as if left by a brigade of firefighters, and street clothes are draped over the edge of a high shelf. Like a decompression chamber, an air lock, or a locker room, the cloakroom is the place where different worlds converge, where the exotic is linked with visible humanity: satchels, hats, purses, name-tags—*belongings*—stowed with familiar gestures of care or disregard. Adding my clothes to the blur, I suit up, dip my booted feet in a dishpan of disinfectant, and open the door to Penguin Quarantine.

A rush of cold air chills my face, a smell of oiled leather dusted with salt hits my nose, and I hear a fugue of high whistles that strike right on the edge of pain. In twenty square white wooden cribs ranged at floor level around the cold room, big, fluffy king-penguin chicks stand upright and toddle, whistle to their handlers, beak-fence with one another, or peer over the edges of their cribs. Only six weeks old, these roly-poly penguin babies have a thick brownish down, like the deepest plush pile of a carpet. When not waddling around the crib or roughhousing with each other, they watch the roomful of busy human beings, whom they have imprinted on and adopted as their parents. Never mind that we are the wrong color, the wrong size, the wrong smell, and the wrong sound for adult king penguins. When their natural mothers gave birth to them, on the sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia, it was already late in the season—too late for most of the chicks, which hatch from pear-shaped eggs, to survive. Frank Todd, formerly corporate curator of birds at San Diego's Sea World, collected these chicks as doomed eggs and brought them back in incubators and padded sea chests to rear safely and distribute among the country's four Sea Worlds.

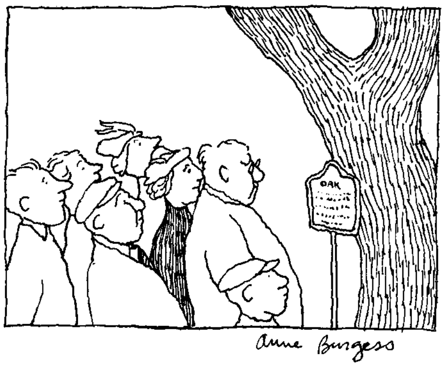
Each crib is lined with smooth, dark pebbles of the sort the chicks would find on South Georgia, and the cribs are arranged in rows with small alleyways between. If this place is a rookery, it's an odd one—of wood, paint, concrete, and, strangest of all, a ceiling—but the essential layout feels right. The penguins, short and potbellied, their necks wobbling with baby fat, huddle together like Russian businessmen in fur coats. Occasionally, one bats a neighbor away with its small flipper. Raucous, shrill, they whistle with operatic strength, waddle around their cribs to get a better view of the human beings, cry to each passerby to stop and feed them, cuddle them, or play. They weave their beaks back and forth, twisting emotion from you, and now and then they squirt a stream of yellow from their rears.

In a side room known as the kitchen, staff biologists and some of a hundred or so volunteers tend the incubators and hand-rear fresh hatchlings. Two young men prepare the babies' formula, which they call "penguin milkshake" (a gruel of krill and predigested protein, Half & Half, herring fillets, and vitamins), heat it to 90° F. in pots of hot water, and test its warmth. The littlest babies are fed five times a day, the larger ones four times. A local hospital donated two of the incubators it used for preemies, and inside the incubators, which are kept at a constant temperature and humidity, naked hatchlings flop all over in the spastic disarray we associate with newborns. Their eyes are not yet focussed, and they can manage only a weak little whistle. On a table in the center of the room, which holds a shoeboxful of cookies someone's mom baked—white-iced Scottie dogs and green-iced turtles—a volunteer is separating eight colors of yarn and making up flipper-bands for the chicks. With everyone wearing green medical clothes, the kitchen looks like an intensive-care ward, and everything is kept scrupulously clean. Penguins are unlikely carriers of disease, but United States poultry farmers fear contagion, so when Sea World brings back penguin eggs the staff must go into quarantine with them for thirty days. A large dishpan of disinfectant lies at every doorway, and volunteers in rubber boots dip their feet hundreds of times in the course of their shift.

The air in an adjoining front room is cold enough to make my breath steam, but not the breath of the baby penguins. Slender black beaks turn toward me as I pass, and pairs of black eyes. The curiosity of penguins in the wild is legendary. They have been known to walk right up to scientists and study *them*. Penguins have no land predators, so they do not instinctively fear people. Just the opposite: they're brave and alert, and the babies waddle around, eager to untie one's shoelaces, slide a beak up one's sweater sleeve, or muss one's bangs.

In a back room, which is kept warmer, I find a white wooden table and more cribs. These are full of chicks between fourteen and sixteen days old, which look much more fetal and helpless than the ones in the cold room. A heat lamp attached to each crib bathes them in red sunlight. In each crib, six chicks huddle together, gawky, rubbery, scruffy. Big sections of skin look like black oilcloth tufted with stringy would-be down, which is just beginning to form. Their whistle is a faint but urgent chirp, and when they try to sit up they rock unsteadily and lean all over themselves. They like to sit with their heads tucked together at the center of a circle, as if they were conferring in private about something, or playing one-potato-two-potato. They need the heat lamp and their collective body heat to stay warm. In the wild, hundreds of baby penguins huddle, with those at the outer edges frantically trying to push their way into the middle. A small animal has less surface area relative to its body's mass than a large animal does, so it loses heat fast and has to make up for the loss with a high metabolic rate. A good example of this is a shrew, a tiny mammal whose metabolic rate is so high that it has to feed all the time.

Occasionally, a penguin chick stands up, topples forward onto its beak in a clumsy lunge, picks itself up, and tries again. White terry-cloth towels laid out over the pebbles in the cribs provide something soft and motherlike to sit on, and protect beaks when chicks fall over, as they inevitably do. The towels and human attentions are no replacement for the constant touching they would have in the wild, but every touch helps. From the time it hatches, a baby king penguin stands on a parent's feet and presses into the parent's stomach, against a toasty area that is there just for that purpose—the brood patch, or pouch. Father and mother take turns holding the baby, which wouldn't survive long on the icy ground. Nuzzling is instinctive. After all, it takes between ten and thirteen months to fledge in the wild—a long time to be exposed to the cold and wet, and to surprise attacks from dive-bombing hungry skuas.



I like handling newborn animals. Fallen into life from an unmappable world, they are the ultimate immigrants, full of wonder and confusion. Gathering a chick up in my hands, I lift it by the feet and rump and hold it close to my body to support its neck as I carry it to the table. One has to be careful of air sacs under the wings; they can be easily damaged. While heat lamps coat the chick in a warm glow, it sits on a towel with its rump against my belly, nestling against its ersatz mother, and mews gently. The baby looks like an old, weathered tennis ball whose covering has frayed. First, I check its general health. I pinch a little of the skin on the back of its neck; if the skin stands up, the penguin may be dehydrated. I examine its scruffy, leprous-looking skin, which is normal for a hatchling. The baby sits quietly as I next measure its beak with callipers. Kings are docile penguins, and don't seem to mind their feet and flippers and weight being measured. I set my chick on a digital scale and wriggle my fingers over its head to hold its attention, so it won't toddle away. It turns its head around and scratches its shoulder.

"Honey, you've got nothing to preen. What are you preening? You're still naked," Carol Strilich, a staff member, says as she jots down the figures from the scale.

I return the chick to the towel and rest it against my stomach. Carol and Chuck Williams, another staff member, pick up chicks of their own. Swivelling a little, I reach across the table to grab a small herring fillet, and Carol calls, "Watch it," pointing to my chick, which has quickly backed up right to the edge of the table and begun to topple off. My hand catches it. Even though the chick can't stand up properly yet, evolution has gifted it with thigmotaxis, an overwhelming drive to press up hard against its parent. When I reached away, it scooted back to find my body. If we were mother and child, we would constantly be making "spoons." To see how thigmotaxis works, I set the chick against my stomach and cup my hands over its head and shoulders, making a warm living pouch for it. Quieting down, it looks up at me, blinks, and whistles to be fed. Normally, it would tap on its mother's beak, and the mother would open her beak and pour regurgitated fish down its throat. Just the sight of the parent's open beak would be enough to signal the baby to open *its* beak and get ready for lunch. I open my mouth wide and lean over in what I imagine would be a penguin mother's posture, but my mouth isn't the right shape to trigger the baby to open its beak. Carol laughs. This has been tried before. However, there is one surefire thing to do. Making a V of my first two fingers, I slide them over the baby's beak, and it springs open. As with many animals, it's the right shape that matters—the right semaphore. With my other hand, I slide a syringe full of formula down the baby's gullet, slowly push the plunger, and pull it out when it's empty. The formula must make it past the trachea or the penguin will stop swallowing. Penguins have a gag response, just as human beings do. I follow the formula with two herring fillets, the baby's first taste of whole fish. The exact amount of food has been worked out beforehand. Carol keeps a logbook of weights and feedings, and at this stage the chicks are weighed each morning and fed—at each meal—ten per cent of what they weigh. They should be growing about five per cent each day.

Carol, Chuck, and various biologists, keepers, and volunteers have been raising all kinds of penguin chicks, but the king babies are unanimous favorites.

"Some of the gentoo chicks we had last time would run right off the table," Carol says. "Emperor chicks would turn around and try to nail you with their beaks. Chinstrap babies are as cute as can be, but a real handful. They're constantly snapping at each other and bickering. But king babies are so affectionate. They just want to nuzzle."

"Most penguins aren't endangered," I say, "and yet you're raising them with this extraordinary care."

"They're extremely sensitive to disturbance. And they live in a fragile ecosystem. We're hand-rearing them now, *before* they're endangered, and—well, the world being what it is, if there's a problem in the future, then we'll be all set to help. If only we had done that earlier with the condor." She slides her fingers over her chick's beak and feeds it a long swig of formula followed by two small herring fillets. Then she weighs it again and carefully returns it to its crib. Because their stomachs are so full, the chicks sometimes vomit their food while they're being set back in their cribs, so handlers must be exquisitely light-handed with them after a meal. Chuck weighs his chick, then sets it back on the towel in front of him and leans over to jot down the data in his logbook, meanwhile nuzzling the chick with his chin and curling it into the crook of his arm.

At day's end, I stop by Frank Todd's office, and find him in the midst of hundreds of pages of raw journal entries, which he's trying to make sense of for a book. A slender man with a dark mustache and a slightly windswept look, he sits surrounded by clouds of cigarette smoke in a cluttered office. This year, he will be having his

MOOD INDIGO

From the porch; from the hayrick where her prickled
brothers hid and chortled and slurped into their young pink
lungs the ash-blond dusty air that lay above the bales

like low clouds; and from the squeak and suck
of the well pump, and from the glove of rust it implied
on her hand; from the dress parade of clothes

in her mothproofed closet; from her tiny Philco
with its cracked speaker and Sunday litany
("Nick Carter," "The Shadow," "Sky King");

from the loosening bud of her body; from hunger,
as they say; and from reading; from the finger
she used to dial her own number; from the dark

loam of the harrowed fields and from the very sky—
it came from everywhere. Which is to say it was
always there, and that it came from nowhere.

It evaporated with the dew, and at dusk when dark
spread in the sky like water in a blotter it spread, too,
but it came back and curdled with milk and stung

with nettles. It was in the bleat of a lamb, the way
a clapper is in a bell, and in the raucous, scratchy
gossip of the crows. It walked with her to school and lay

with her to sleep and at last she was well pleased.
If she were to sew, she would prick her finger with it.
If she were to bake, it would linger in the kitchen

like an odor snarled in the deepest folds of childhood.
It became her dead pet, her lost love, the baby sister
blue and dead at birth, the chill headwaters of the river

that purled and meandered and ran and ran until
it issued into her, as into a sea, and then she was its
and it was wholly hers. She kept to her room, as we

learned to say, but now and then she'd come down
and pass through the kitchen, and the screen door
would close behind her with no more sound than

an envelope being sealed, and she'd walk for hours
in the fields like a lithe blue rain, and end up
in the barn, and one of us would go and bring her in.

—William Matthews

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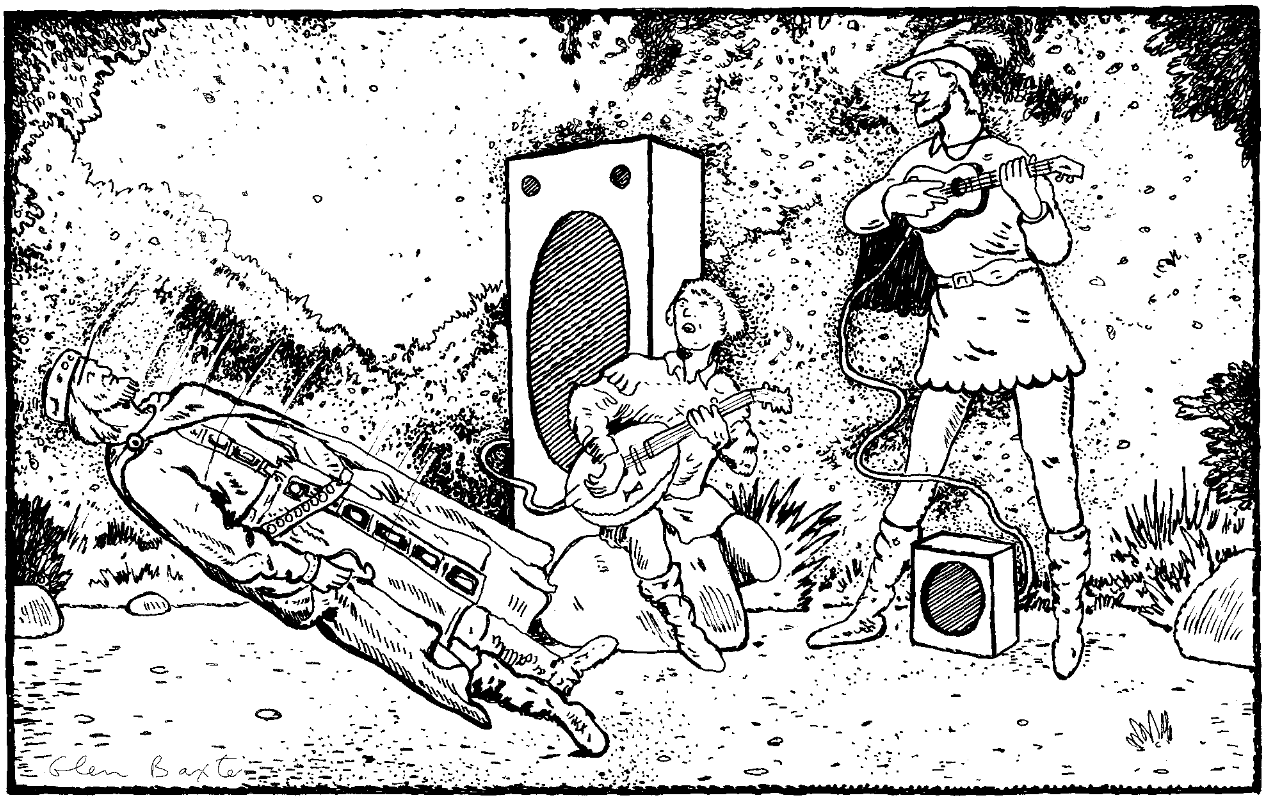

"CAN I TAKE IT THAT THE ELECTRIC LUTE IS NOT TO YOUR LIKING, MY LIEGE?" QUOTH ROBIN.

• •

sixteenth season in the Antarctic, and there are suitcases with R.A.F. tags in one corner, patches from various Antarctic stations on a wall, and, here and there, an array of artifacts, including a taxidermized penguin and a coffee mug that has printed on it, "Life is a bitch. Then you die." Each year, Todd makes his way to the Antarctic, collects eggs that would otherwise perish, flies them back to San Diego, and begins the intensive process of hatching and raising the chicks in quarantine.

"We keep the polar penguins in relative darkness all summer long to provide the exact cycle of darkness and light they would find in the Antarctic—remember, the seasons are reversed south of the equator," Todd tells me. "And when we bring back adults we choose mated pairs—we can determine their identity from bioacoustics. It's tough to move highly specialized birds. Among other things, you need a refrigerated airplane."

"I know you have a fine success rate, but do any of the hatchlings die?"

"Occasionally. Hunchbacks, for instance."

"Hunchback penguins?"

"Oh, yes. And some penguins refuse to molt on schedule or are undersized. We keep our polar penguins indoors, and, as a result, we don't have a problem with their catching avian malaria from mosquitos. Other zoos do have that problem."

"Penguins catch malaria?"

"It's a serious problem. In 1963, all the penguins at the San Diego Zoo were thought to have died of malaria."

The Southern California sun is pouring through the window. "Don't you find your life split up? The contrast must be unnerving."

"Everybody's life is split up," Todd says. "People might not want to recognize it, but it's split up between what they do in the wintertime and what they do in the summer. In October, the people around here begin to detect a change in my behavior, which they attribute to polar fever. It's an aspect of my life that I consider almost normal now. In the fall—that is, the *northern* fall—my eyes start to turn to the south. In fact, that's the way it is for most scientists who work with penguins. We migrate, just like them."

Just thinking of the Antarctic makes his conversation twist into a moment of heightened emotion: "There's no place as pristinely beautiful, where the air is clearer, the grandeur more overwhelming, the animals more fascinating. If God took a vacation on this planet, He would go to the Antarctic."

I VOLUNTEER to spend the next day in the cold room, tending the toddlers, who are already boisterous and quite tall (between one and two feet), full of energy, and insistently affectionate. With their big, round bodies and small heads, they look like miniature bears. Their eyes are as black as poppy seeds. Long flippers—wings, actually—hang down almost to their feet. Their heads nest in rolls of soft down, and they have little paintbrush tails. They look so different from the spectacularly colored adult penguins they'll become that the first scientists who saw them thought they were a different species, and named them "woolly penguins."

The toddlers' high-pitched whistle is the only noise that can penetrate the din of a king-penguin rookery, where perhaps a hundred thousand birds

THIS EXIT
THIS EX

may be feeding, nesting, mating, and quarrelling about territories. When a baby is big enough to be left behind in a crèche of hundreds, or even thousands, of babies, its parents go off to fish, and return to find legions of identical-looking babies in the rookery's madding crowd. It's extremely confusing, and in some species a number of chicks will chase after one adult, thinking it's their parent, until eventually all but the real offspring realize they've made a mistake, and drop out. Unimaginable as it may seem, parent and chick recognize one another by voice. Every bird has its own personal voiceprint, and a baby penguin can recognize its parent's call. Small though the cold room is compared with a rookery, it's full of confusing sounds and penguin whistles that interrupt each other, overlap or entwine, and quickly blur into a solid wall of noise. I try to imagine a rookery in which there are a hundred thousand separate, recognizably different whistles.

In Penguin Quarantine, handlers identify penguins by color-coded strands of yarn or plastic circling a flipper. Blue-red-right in the C-1 crib is the first penguin we feed in the cold room. I take the syringe, fill it with formula, make a V with my free hand to trigger the feeding response, and carefully slide the tube down the chick's throat. Then the chick gets eight silvery whole fish from a bucket. By now, all the other chicks in the crib are lunging greedily for the food, and it's hard to remember which beak to feed. When I locate blue-red-right by its flipperband, I tap the side of its beak with a fish and the beak springs open long enough for me to slide one fish down whole, then another, then the next six. The chicks in this crib are hefty, around fifteen pounds, and they're full of spunk and clangor. When we finish with the first crib, we disinfect our hands in a tub of chlorine and water and move on to the next crib. The second group gets more formula but only five fish. Again, we dip our hands in chlorine and water. The chicks in the third crib get more formula but two and a half fish, and that means ripping smelt in half with my hands, not one of my favorite things to do, especially when blankets of roe pour out. But the wail of the hungry penguins is heartbreaking, as it's designed to be. They open their mouths, look up at you in anguish, and swing their beaks back and forth, while squeaking plaintively, "Feed me! And if you can't feed me cuddle me!" I lean over and wrap my arms around three penguin babies at once, press their silky down to my face, and hug them tight. They relax. Then one of them puts a beak up and taps at my face. It's lunchtime. Don't I know anything? As we travel between the cribs with formula and smelt, penguins in the cribs across the alleyway try to pull the towel out of my back pocket and shriek to get my attention. After feeding, they quiet down and stand like sentinels.

In the last crib, F-1, six chicks wail for food and climb all over each other to get at the smelt. One of them, brown-white-left, is a little smaller and less forthcoming than the rest, and it has a noticeably light, tinkling, music-box voice. Its flipperband makes it look like a veteran of war, someone who has worked out an armistice with nature. When the time comes to feed it, I wrap one arm around it, to keep the others away, and gently tap its beak with a smelt. Nothing can tug at your parental instincts harder than a baby penguin looking up at you, its eyes moist with helplessness, as it cries to be fed, just to be fed. Brown-white-left holds its beak open wide between fish, and I notice that its tongue is pale and thick, like the fuzzy comb of an iris, with tiny backward-facing hooks—a raspy surface to hold fish and urge them down

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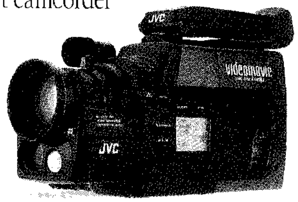
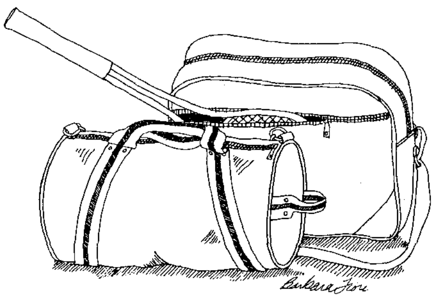


For product information, call 1-800-2-t-i-l-l-e-y-30095 the throat. "Mind if I stroke?" I ask brown-white-left, so that it can hear the sound of my voice. I chatter to it about summer, the Antarctic, my home in the East, and stroke its tongue with my finger. It feels rough and slightly plastic. Then I stick my finger down its throat and feel its tongue gently rasping and its neck rippling as it tries to swallow my finger. I pull my finger out. "You're just a feathered dinosaur, you know," I tell brown-white-left softly in as high a voice as I can manage. For most animals, a growl or anything resembling it, such as a low voice, signals danger. Around the baby's eyes, down has begun to shed and will soon be replaced by feathers, but at the moment its face appears to have a sunburn that has begun to peel. When I slide a hand under one of its boomerang-shaped wings, it feels warm. But its feet are quite cold. King penguins look as if they're wearing black surgical gloves on their feet. Thanks to an adaptation known as the rete mirabile, the blood in their nasal passages and in their feet stays the same temperature as that of the Antarctic water they'll be swimming in. Blood from the warm arteries flows alongside the cold venous blood and is cooled by it. According to the laws of thermodynamics, heat will always travel to cold. But these animals have evolved a way for that to happen inside their bodies instead of outside, so they don't get frostbite or suffer terribly in icy weather.

Lifting brown-white-left out of its crib, I set it on my rubber boots, and it instinctively presses up against me, throws its head back, and calls for me to feed it. Since it has been fed enough for lunch, I lean over and wrap my arms around it and snuggle it tight. Its beak, which is a thick glossy black, like the black of a vanilla bean, searches under my shirt collar and then slides up my sweater sleeve. When the chicks are older, they will preen themselves with oil from a gland at the base of the tail, coating their feathers so that water will run off. But now they feel soft and warm. In the wild, one of the most critical times for fledging chicks is during a rainstorm. Snow doesn't bother the chicks much, but their down absorbs water; if it should rain, a chick's down would get drenched and retain the water, and the chick could become chilled to its skin and die.

A penguin's sex organs are internal, so it's hard to know whether a penguin is male or female until it mates. One woman staff member is attempting to tell the difference by recording and studying the pattern of calls, and another scientist is trying to determine sex from the remains of feces in the shells. Brown-white-left gently probes into my hand, up my sleeve, into my hair, nestling, groping. I think brown-white-left is a male, but I have no way of making certain. While I go about my chores, it watches me, making little chirps and whistles, and I chatter back, regularly pausing to hug it. Then the obvious dawns on me: in the almost deafening clamor of Penguin Quarantine, the only individual penguin's voice I recognize is brown-white-left's; and brown-white-left recognizes my voice. The image that flashes into my mind is of a film I once saw of Konrad Lorenz up to his neck in a lake, with a flock of goslings following him as he swam. I put the smelt I'm holding back in the pail, wipe my hands, and return to the F-1 crib yet again. Wrapping an arm around brown-white-left, I pull it close, and it nuzzles deep into my collar, finds my warm neck, and whistles quietly. Outside a small glass window, where Sea World's visitors can stand and watch the nursery doings, rows of people sigh in unison.

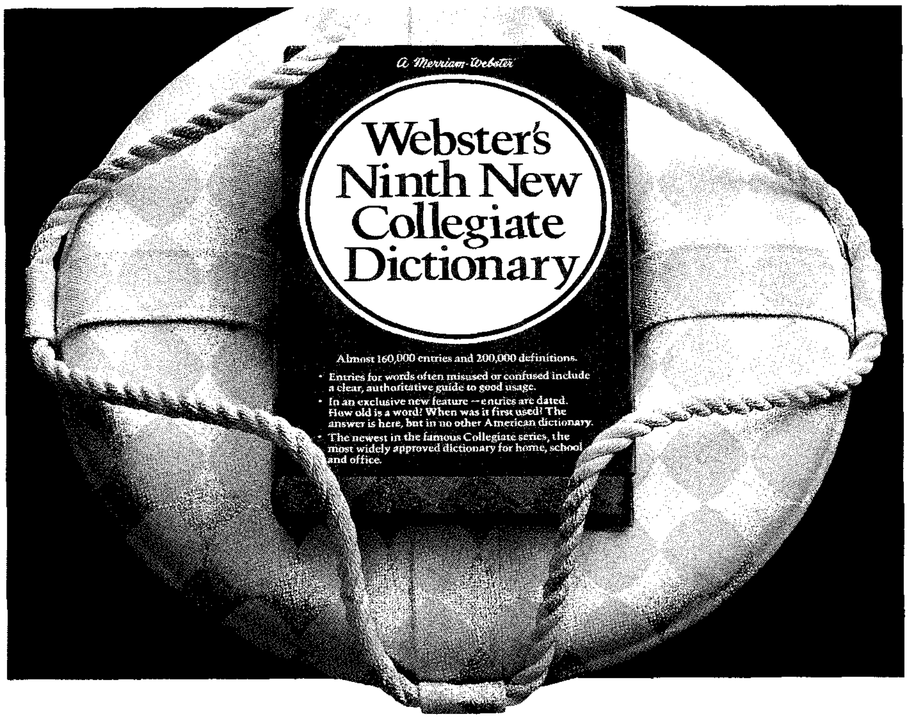
PENGUINS may be the most anthropomorphic of all animals. Everyone identifies with them. Nor have I ever been with another animal that brought out such a mothering instinct in me. Why do people respond so strongly to penguins? First, they stand straight and walk upright, like us, so we see them as little humanoids—a convention of headwaiters, ten thousand nuns, plump babies in snowsuits. On land, they have a comical waddling walk, very similar to a human toddler's. They tend to walk right up to you: looking down, you find an affectionate creature standing as tall and straight as a young child and perhaps offering you its flipper as if to shake hands. Another reason adult penguins are easy to anthropomorphize is that they sometimes seem so much a caricature of human beings. They like company but also bicker with their neighbors; they give their mates gifts of pretty stones but also quarrel with them from time to time, have affairs, and divorce and remarry; they're affectionate, attentive parents and share the child rearing; they live in colonies that function like cities; they're plagued by adolescent gangs; they're forever waddling around at high speed, as if on important errands. They are creatures of instinct, but then so are we. Our instincts dwell under layers of inhibitions, social codes, bridled emotions, feats of mental dressage, and hand-me-down wisdom, but when it comes to the basics of hunger, sex, and child rearing they're as strong as any penguin's.



If someone were to design an adorable animal, which looked and acted enough like a human being to be endearing but was different enough to be exotic, a penguin would do perfectly. When I was a child, and home air-conditioning was rare, I used to look for a shop with a tiny penguin decal on its door, for that meant that the shop was blissfully air-conditioned. Today, penguins adorn ice-cream bars, greeting cards, calendars, hanks of wool, postage stamps, cigarettes, chocolate-covered mints, and many other products. British pubs are sometimes named the Penguin, which is also the name of one of Batman's archenemies. Both Berke Breathed and Gary Larson use penguins as caricatures of human beings in their enchanting cartoons. But probably the most famous penguins are those adorning Penguin Books. In the mid-thirties, Allen Lane wanted to launch a paperback house, but he didn't have a name for it. His secretary suggested "Penguin"—an immediate hit, because it captured for him just the right attitude of "dignified flippancy." It's small wonder, then, that during the Falklands war one English town I know of collected money (or "had a whip-round," as they put it) to help save the islands' large population of penguins. The fate of the pilots, sheepherders, and infantrymen didn't seem to concern them as much.

Avid bird-spotters know how easy it is to get confused about birds, so many of which look alike. Indeed, most birds are what birders call "L.B.J.s"—"little brown jobs." Penguins, on the other hand, are uniquely identifiable, not just among birds but among all animals on earth. Everyone knows what a penguin looks like. Yet people have shocking misconceptions about penguins. For one thing, they don't live at the South Pole. Not only is the South Pole about eight hundred miles from the closest body of water but it's at an altitude of almost ten thousand feet. Nor do they live with Eskimos and polar bears, both of which are found at the top of the world, in the Arctic. They don't have fur, even though the babies may feel as soft as mink. Mammals have fur; penguins are birds, and they have feathers. Although they are known as flightless birds, like ostriches, emus, kiwis, rheas, cassowaries, and the now extinct moas and dodoes, they are on the same branch of the evolutionary tree as hummingbirds. According to the fossil record, flying and flightless birds evolved from a common ancestor; it's just that penguins adapted to their environment differently from songbirds. A wren needs to fly away from a cat or a fox, but a penguin's chief enemies are skillful oceanic predators like leopard seals and killer whales, and it needs to be agile in the water, not on land or in the air. Penguins' adaptation to their environment has been so successful that they haven't changed much in forty million years. They used to be larger—standing over five feet tall and weighing around three hundred pounds—and not a few scientists have observed that they would have made great football players. The biggest penguin alive today, the emperor, stands about four feet tall and weighs as much as a hundred pounds. In contrast, the smallest, the fairy, is a mere twelve inches tall and weighs only two and a half pounds. People see films of penguins waddling across the ice, hear them referred to as flightless birds, and naturally assume that penguins can't fly.

But penguins do indeed fly—they fly in water. Using their wings, which are flat and tapered and have a rounded leading edge, and flapping like any swift or lark, penguins fly through the water to feed and to escape predators. Although penguins may be hefty, in the ocean they're essentially weightless. Their wings are strong and paddlelike, to power them through the dense water at speeds as high as fifteen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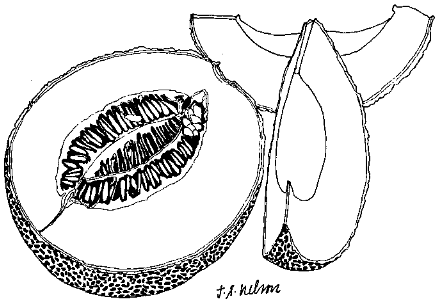
miles per hour. They use their short, brushlike tails and webbed feet to steer. Magnificently aquatic, penguins arc out of the water—the move is called "porpoising"—to breathe as they swim. They don't fill their lungs with air but take in just enough to keep their lungs from collapsing, and actually breathe out rather than in just before they reënter the water. When a penguin dives, its pulse goes from a hundred beats a minute to only twenty beats a minute, and because it takes only one shallow breath it doesn't get the bends. Penguins are streamlined like torpedoes, and, indeed, the Navy has studied their shape.

"Penguin," you might say to a friend in a game of free association, and your friend is bound to answer "snow" or "ice" or "South Pole." But only four species of penguins live on the Antarctic continent, and only two are restricted exclusively to the Antarctic. Most live in slightly balmier climates, on sub-Antarctic islands like South Georgia and the Falklands, or along the coasts of South America, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand; and one species lives in the Galápagos, near the equator. No penguins live north of the equator, though, nor have they ever. The ocean currents aren't favorable for carrying them that far north. And, anyway, northern coasts wouldn't be as attractive a locale for them. True, their cousins the ostriches manage to survive among lions, leopards, and other land predators, because of their extraordinary speed, strength, and size, but penguins certainly aren't hot rods.

There is also some confusion about how the penguin got its name. One story insists that the word comes from the Welsh *pen gwyn*, or "white head," and refers to the two white spots on the head of the extinct great auk, a black-and-white flightless northern bird originally named penguin. Another story credits the Latin word *pinguis*, meaning fat, and refers to the penguin's many layers of blubber. Still another traces the word back to British seafaring days, when sailors supposedly called the bird "pin-wings." The Argentines call the penguin *pájaro niño*, "child bird."

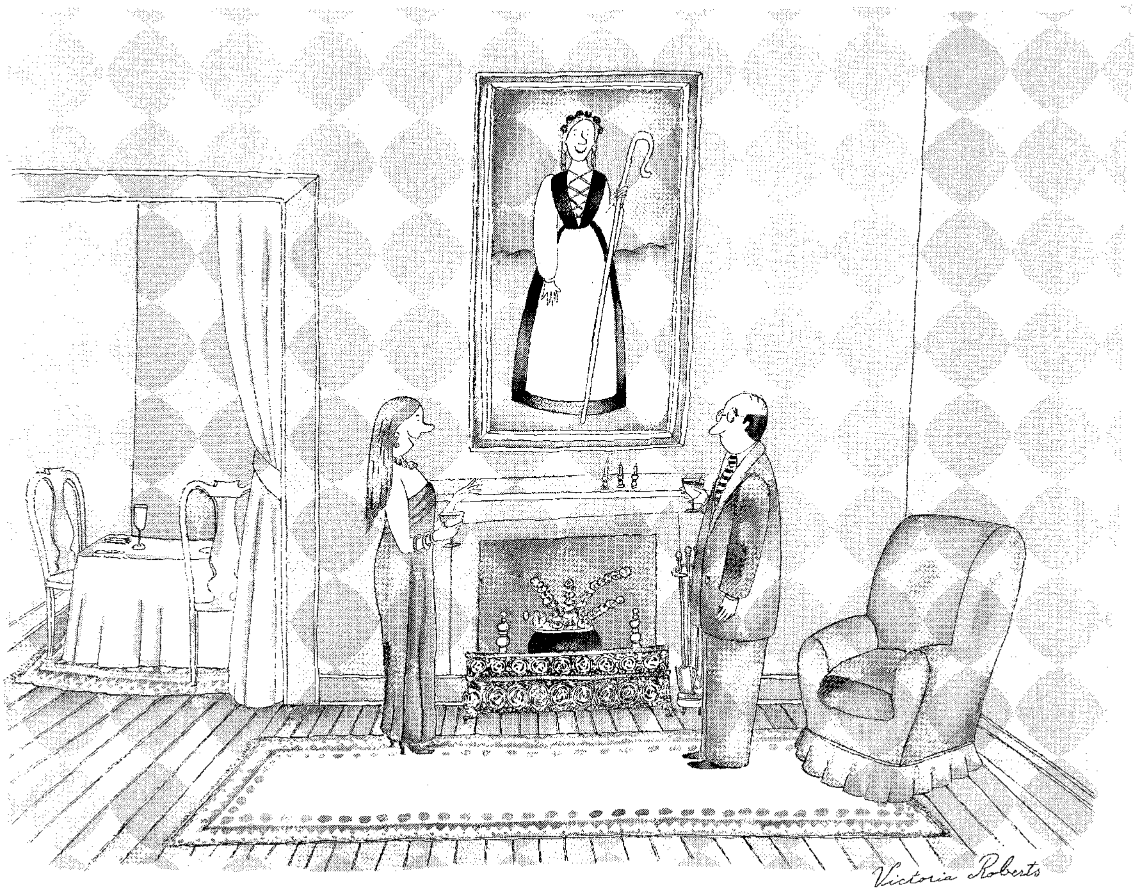
Photographs show penguins on ice floes or against a backdrop of towering Antarctic ice cliffs, so people assume that penguins live on land. But some species spend as much as seventy-five per cent of their lives in the water. Scientists see penguins only during their brief courting, mating, molting, and brooding season on land. The rest of the time the penguins are migrating, and may stay at sea for as much as five months at a stretch. This means that when they are onshore they aren't in the watery element they're designed for. We see them waddle and stumble like "animated laundry bags," as penguin expert Olin Pettingill, Jr., called them, and we laugh, and assume that they're just naturally clumsy. But underwater they're sleek, agile, and fast. Almost everything we know about penguins comes from observing them during only one phase of their life cycle—the land phase. They would find us lethargic and clumsy if they saw us only stumbling around in the dark. People think of penguins as slow movers. Though penguins can't outrun a lion, they can skedaddle on land if they really need to. In powdery snow, they can outrun a human being, but their best trick is to fall onto their stomachs and toboggan, picking up speed as they career down an icy hill. They can leap onto huge icebergs, and to do that they need timing, balance, and coördination. They would make grand tightrope walkers.

Penguins are birds, and birds have hollow bones, right? Other birds do have hollow bones, which make them light enough to fly through the air, but penguins don't. Penguins need to be buoyant in the water, but not too buoyant, or they wouldn't be able to dive for krill and fish. It's important that they have some sort of ballast, so penguins have solid bones, like ours. Films often show penguins standing on an ice floe eying the ocean until one is "pushed" in as a "sacrificial victim" to test the waters for a hungry leopard seal. Such a scheme would require more malevolent presence of mind than penguins have. Instead, what usually happens is that so many penguins are crowded onto an ice overhang that those near the edge get nudged off. When that occurs, the others plunge right in; they're very much creatures of the mob.



WHEN my quarantine period is up, I enter Sea World's Penguin Encounter, and sit quietly inside this large glassed-in environment that is as much a display as a home for the many species of penguins that live there. Nesting, mating, swimming in a wide, deep pool, they lead a reasonably normal life. They don't seem to mind sudden flashes of light that now and then glitter like distant supernovas. Although their world is brightly lit, just beyond the glass window moving walkways carry thousands of Sea World visitors past in relative darkness. I can see their ghostly outlines from my corner, where, seated on shaved ice, I lean against a rock ledge while one penguin tries to eat my shoelace and another climbs into my lap. Closed-circuit video cameras jut out from the ceiling to monitor the penguins' doings. An adult king penguin dives into the pool and moments later springs out on the other side. It's tempting to think of these display penguins as displaced creatures, but they know nothing of their true homes, half a world away. What must their lives be like in the wild? To crave an answer to that question is to be tempted to make what Apsley Cherry-Garrard in 1922 called "the worst journey in the world." A member of Scott's final expedition, he survived to write a memoir, of that title, recalling his long, courageous trek with two companions across the Antarctic in 1911. Though it was winter, the three men went by sled a hundred and thirty miles overland on an extremely hazardous trip from Scott's base camp to Cape Crozier, which took five weeks in the polar night, just to obtain a few emperor-penguin eggs. Scientists then thought that emperors were very primitive birds, and they wanted to study some embryos. The temperature plunged to −77° F., and the winds howled at well over a hundred miles an hour, yet the three men survived. Later, two of them died with Scott on his tragic bid for the South Pole; Cherry-Garrard returned home to tell of that worst journey in the world—a phrase that became synonymous with trekking in Antarctica. Today, one can sleep at night on a luxury cruise ship, where a

German chef serves gourmet meals, and there are lecture halls and movies. But the trip is still arduous.



"And that's me as a shepherdess!"

• •

ONE cold, bright Sunday in January, I fly fifteen hours to Santiago, Chile, and stay overnight at a hotel there. The next day, two more flights carry me to Puerto Williams, a bleak Chilean outpost that includes barracks for military personnel, a museum, and one out-of-place-looking bowling alley. There I board Society Expeditions' World Discoverer, a German-owned cruise ship that travels the world with lecturers, naturalists, tourists, and a large crew, mainly of Filipinos and Germans. On last year's trip, the weather was so rough in Drake Passage, below Cape Horn, that many passengers went to their cabins, tied themselves into their beds with belts provided for that purpose, and stayed there for two days. I hope the seas will be calmer this year, but I've brought seven forms of anti-seasickness medication, in case. When Shackleton, the famous explorer, made this trip to Antarctica early in the century, he used wooden ships and then sled dogs. What would he have made of a cruise ship complete with library, laundry, infirmary, sauna, gym, and Art Deco dining room? In addition to a hundred and twenty-nine tourists from all over the world, there may be scientists hitching a ride. (Frank Todd was on the previous sailing, coming aboard from a British Navy vessel on which he had been doing research.) Although this may sound like a large pilgrimage to the Antarctic, it's really very small.

You see, on any Saturday or Sunday afternoon in the fall there are more people in a single big football stadium than have ever been to the Antarctic in all of history. It is a distant, unknown world, and its problems seem remote. Yet it fascinates people. Sea World in San Diego sells hundreds of books about penguins every month. The Penguin Encounters at the four Sea Worlds combined draw twelve million people a year. When the Antarctic Treaty comes up for review, in 1991, we human beings everywhere else in the world may need to decide the fate of the largest desert on earth, one of the last wildernesses, which most of us have never seen and will never see. We will be responsible for deciding the fate of its penguins, seals, and other birds and creatures. The treaty outlaws such acts of environmental sabotage as nuclear-bomb tests and the harboring of weapons systems, and insists that the continent "shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes." But perhaps the most important thing it does is to protect the future of people who live as far away as Iowa or Tokyo. The Antarctic ice cap contains seventy per cent of all the fresh water on earth, and we may one day need it.

As much as anything, the Antarctic's problems are political. The treaty has been in effect for almost thirty years, and twelve nations were the original signers. Since then, twenty-six countries have joined the treaty, eight as voting members. Having remained essentially intact for the entire time that it has been in effect, the treaty has to some extent protected the Antarctic from exploitation. That doesn't mean, though, that science has been compromised, or that the Antarctic is a self-protected, hands-off kind of place. One of the reasons the treaty has been successful is that it doesn't really deal with two sensitive issues: the exploitation of minerals (gold, copper, silver, beryl, iron, zinc, graphite, and coal have been identified there), and fishing rights on the high seas (including whales, seals, penguins, and krill). Those two issues may not be resolvable. Many scientists would like the treaty to be extended for five or ten years *because* those key issues can't be sorted out. Greenpeace would like the Antarctic declared a global park (an idea implied by the treaty itself). Although the Antarctic scientists from different lands get on well together, visit one another's outposts, go to one another's parties and generally

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wish one another well in the name of science and their common state of isolation, their countries are constantly bickering about who owns what pieces of Antarctic territory. A number of countries claim the same prime pieces. If you look at a map of Argentina, it includes a large part of the Antarctic. A map of Chile includes the same Antarctic territory. The British claim the territory, too. The United Nations wants control of the whole continent on behalf of all the people on the planet, but many scientists think that wouldn't work. After all, they argue, the U.N. hasn't been able to solve the problems of the rest of the world. Why give it Antarctica?

One thing that complicates the problem is how hard it is for scientists to get to Antarctica in the first place. At the moment, only a handful of C-130 airplanes fly into and out of the Antarctic Peninsula. If all of them break down, traffic stops and everyone is marooned. Todd one time found himself in just that predicament, and he quickly discovered the frontier camaraderie among the multinational researchers who work down there. "So there we were, an American team, dicking around in Chile, trying to figure out what to do," he had told me at Sea World. "We got on board the World Discoverer, a German ship chartered by Americans, were taken to the Antarctic, and had our cargo off-loaded by Indonesians and Filipinos into a Russian LCM steered by East Germans to a Chilean base. Then we were flown by the Chileans to an Argentine *refugio* and had our communications to the States sent via the Chinese at the Chinese station, and the Brazilian Air Force brought us and our eggs out at the end of our stay. There's no place else in the world where you can do that."

Such political concerns drift off into the suburbs of our minds in Puerto Williams when, before sailing, we gather in the ship's spacious lounge to meet the lecturers and one another, and begin talking about penguins, which some of us have come from as far away as South Africa, Switzerland, or Germany to see. Two large birding groups have also come, to pursue exotic seabirds. Some of these birders have travelled together before—on jaunts to Ecuador, the South Pacific, New Guinea, the Galápagos, and other far places. They are easy to spot in a crowd, with their heavy Zeiss 10x40B birding binoculars—"armored" and with "close focus" features—draped down the chest, with the lens cap looking like a black bow tie that has slipped around to the back of the neck. They have two long lists of birds they hope to spot, with boxes in which to check off each sighting, or just write an "H" if they only hear the call of the bird. (The rules of bird-spotting are as tortuous as international law.) Tonight, on the ledge of the journey, when all of us are excited, the birders have begun rubbing their collective mania together like high-quality flints. Before going to bed, they meet with their leaders to run down their lists and get ready for the morning's landing at Cape Horn, which is right at the end of the tailbone of South America. The ocean currents and winds at Cape Horn are legendary for their ferocity, and though it is only five miles square, it has come to symbolize a breakaway from the known world and civilization. Like a last handhold, Cape Horn reaches into the southern ocean, and beyond it floats Antarctica.

AT five o'clock on a cool, damp morning, I wake in a narrow bed to many movements at once: from the knees down, my legs feel as if they're dropping down an elevator shaft; then my torso shimmies twice; finally, my chest rolls like a bag full of peaches. For a few moments, I settle into sleep, and then wake to what feels like someone sitting down on the bed beside me. When I open my eyes, no one is there. I close them, someone sits down beside me again; open them, no one is there. Plunging and swaying, the ship surges through the waves, hitting them crosswise, and the motion sets my stomach revolving. I want to cry, like Stephano in "The Tempest," "Prithee do not turn me about, my stomach is not constant." Finally, to calm it down, I try to picture the motion that is seizing me. It's a motion familiar in my joints and in my nervous system: cantering on a fresh, high-spirited horse that has a tantrum lying just under the surface. My stomach settles. The alarm clock rings, and, holding on to the wall, I stand up and look out through the nearer of my two portholes onto a mountainous landscape, alien, barren, cold.

A six-bell melody sounds over the intercom, and the expedition leader tells us that it will be a "wet landing," and we are to wear full gear, which includes waterproof pants, knee-high boots, a bright-red hooded parka, waterproof gloves, a scarf, a hat, a life vest, and a rucksack to hold our camera, binoculars, and other supplies. Breakfast will come later, when we return from the morning's trek. A hundred and twenty-nine people line up on B deck to turn a hundred and twenty-nine numbered tags hanging on a board to the "red side" to signal to the crew that they're on land (returning, they'll flip their tags back to the black side, so everyone can be accounted for before the ship sails on), and step, one by one, into waiting Zodiacs. The tag system is really important on this cruise. Last year, a traveller onshore stumbled, hit his head, and passed out, and was discovered several hours later by a search party that set out when his tag remained unturned. The Zodiacs, black-and-orange inflatable motorized rafts of the sort used by the military, carry us to a sheltered bay on the east side of Cape Horn, which has a beach of large ocean-smoothed stones and a lot of seaweed, and we find our naturalist guides waiting at the bottom of a steep flight of stairs. We gather around Peter Harrison, the distinguished birder; Bernard Stonehouse, a world authority on penguins, whose wife, Sally, is with him; Commander Angus Erskine, historian, retired British naval officer, and Arctic and Antarctic explorer; Richard Rowlett, a specialist in marine mammals, who has just spent six years on a Russian whaling ship; and Robert Ridgely, an ornithologist from the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. Then we begin a climb up a hundred and fifty feet of slippery wooden steps to a hilltop, which opens out onto a windswept field of dense tussock grass, rocky outcroppings, a small chapel, and a Chilean weather station.

"Up the steps and turn left," Erskine instructs us matter-of-factly. "Turn right and you'll be in a minefield." Laughter from the climbers. "No," he says, in a well-tempered

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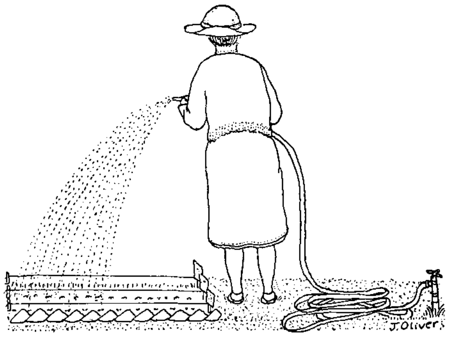
English accent. "It is a real minefield." It's not hard to picture Erskine in command of a twenty-five-hundred-ton destroyer, as he was in the Royal Navy for many years. Tall, upright, sandy-haired, bearded, he is the epitome of the British officer—someone who maintains good posture even in bad terrain.

Harrison, at the top of the steps, is wearing a white sweater with a pattern of black dashes on it and white knit gloves with black dots. Slender, with a neatly trimmed blondish beard and mustache, he looks a bit avian himself as he stops suddenly, lifts his binoculars to his eyes, and creeps forward. "*Pshhh, pshh, pshh,*" he stage-whispers. It turns out he has heard the call of the thorn-tailed rayadito, a little white-throated, brown-backed, russet-eyebrowed bird with a children's-toy squeak for a call, and he's hoping to flush it from its cover. There's a small flutter in the brush. "A thorn-tailed rayadito!" He extends one arm, points, follows the bird with his hand. Devout birders lift their cameras and binoculars to their eyes.

"Oh, I've seen one of those," one woman says wearily, and continues climbing the winding staircase toward the summit.

"They often go around in small family parties," Harrison says excitedly, then interrupts himself. "Not there!" he warns a wayward birder who is drifting into a field to the right. "That's a minefield!" She laughs. Erskine had told her the same thing. What a card these lecturers were! "No, that's a *real* minefield," Harrison says, lowering his binoculars to follow her movements. By this time, Erskine has reached the top, and, putting a hand gently on her shoulder, he explains, "The Chileans always feared an Argentine invasion, so they put a machine nest here, a helicopter pad there"—he points to a large ring of white stones—"and all sorts of land mines, some of which are still unexploded." Slightly disconcerted, the woman turns and hurries to the left, over bogs of thick, spongy peat mixed with penguin guano, through fields of tussock grass as impenetrable as muscle. An ovenbird sings sweetly. On a distant promontory of our island, a twenty-five-foot-high red-and-white lighthouse marks the tip of Cape Horn. Then a raucous braying, as of donkeys, begins, and we look toward a cliff and see two Magellanic penguins pop up beside their burrow. With concentric circles of black and white on their cheeks, pink splotches around their eyes, and a smile-shaped pink strip below their bills, they look impish. Almost immediately they disappear. It is our first sighting of wild penguins, and we were not expecting to find them here, such an arduous climb above the sea. But, it seems, to nest where the drainage is good and their eggs will be safe from flood Magellanics may climb as much as nine hundred feet. Another pair pops up and brays from another clump of grass, flashing pink eye masks. We did not expect them to bray like jackasses, either. I turn in a slow circle, scanning the tussock grass: penguins pop up like targets in a shooting gallery, watch us for a while, then disappear into their burrows. Then I look down: along a crescent-shaped beach at the bottom of the hill stand hundreds more penguins, who are getting ready to swim out to sea to feed or are returning with full bellies. Some utter long, honking mating calls, and others short, rapid "rallying calls," just to let the world know they are Magellanics. The wind has risen to forty miles per hour, and the cold air starts to creep into my clothes. A striated caracara, a beautiful brown-and-gold bird of prey related to the falcons, slips sidewise across the sky, its huge wings carrying it like a solar sail. Between the quicksand-like mixture of mud and guano and the coarse tussock grass, there is only one route to travel: along the penguin pathways, which lead in a hard-to-see labyrinth across the hilltop and down to the sea. At the base of tussocks the size of grass huts, among clusters of veronica, lie holes that the penguins have dug for nests.

"For those of you who haven't ticked off a Chilean skua yet," Bob Ridgely says, "there are two of them flying low over that ridge." The birders turn their heads in unison.



"Oh, what's this, now?" Stonehouse says. Scuttling through the brush is a young Magellanic penguin, and in a moment he and Harrison have grabbed it, pinning its wings and holding it gently but securely. It has a black face with tufts of brown at the neck, a black-and-white body, and a pinkish splotch at each eye. "This is a juvenile penguin whose parents have deserted it," Stonehouse tells us. "It's making its way down to the ocean, and when it gets there it's going to stand on the beach for a few days and then go to sea. If it has enough fat, it will make it. All around here you'll find the burrows where the chicks were raised. Unlike the Antarctic penguins, which hatch out onto stones or onto the feet of their parents, these penguins start their lives safe underground. Some animals become able-bodied and alert soon after they're born, so that they can flee a predator, but these penguins don't have to hatch out feathered and alert. They hatch out blind and quite helpless, and are covered with a fine layer of pale grayish down." When they put the chick back in the grass, it flops onto its belly and toboggans downhill toward the beach part of the rookery. The term "rookery" first referred, of course, to a group of rooks, which are also colonial birds. Then it was carried over to crows, and, finally, to other collections of breeding birds, and even to some mammals, like fur seals. Penguins are supremely colonial, forming rookeries that can sprawl for hundreds of acres. Living together means they can unite against skuas and other predators, protect their young, and migrate together.

As most of the others hurry across a field in pursuit of a rare plumbeous rail, Stonehouse and I mosey among the tussocks of deep, rich, bent-over grass. Stonehouse, tall and slender, with a blue rucksack and a purple-and-pale-blue college scarf, looks for the moment like the Cambridge don he is. And when he speaks you can just detect the Cambridge "r" that Jacob Bronowski introduced to many American viewers on PBS. In fact, Bronowski lodged in the Stonehouses' home when Bernard was just a boy, and was the first to encourage his bright, inquiring young mind. Now Stonehouse smiles, pulls aside some tussock grass, and reveals a large, round burrow. "Smell," he says, and I kneel in the sod and inhale the sweet, oily saltiness of penguin. Suddenly, a beak juts out of the darkness and sweeps swiftly back and forth. We laugh. The burrow's resident is at home.

"How on earth do they find their way from the beach to their nests through all this vegetation?" I ask. Surely, only coal miners and spelunkers face mazier tunnels.

"We don't know for sure. Penguin navigation is a mysterious thing. It could be magnetic, they could be using the sun, or they could be memorizing the details of their neighborhood and finding their way back by signposts alone."

As I've said, almost everything we know about penguins is based on their life onshore, during their brief breeding season, and their life onshore is a circumscribed life, since they're designed for the sea. Many questions remain: What do they do when we can't see them? What happens to them during the winter, when they live in the water, constantly swimming and porpoising for air? Where do they feed? In the summer, the waters are murky—full of kelp and sediment—but in the winter the water grows clear and lucid. Most adult penguins die at sea, and winter must be a time of great hazard for them: although they can see their food better, leopard seals can see them better. Do the various colonies stay together, or do they scatter throughout the ice floes? Penguins are like icebergs—a scintillating mystery, most of which is hidden.

Withdrawing carefully, and sinking and stumbling through a compost of peat, guano, and lichen, we make our way along the hilltop to the chapel, a small log cabin. Inside, a wooden altar sits on two tree stumps, and a vase holding a dry, brown stalk of evergreen trimmed with tinsel and one pinecone reminds us that Christmas Mass was celebrated here not very long ago. A print of the Virgen del Carmen, Reina de Chile, adorns the wall; she is a beautiful teen-age girl holding a child whose head and arms are slightly out of proportion, like a dwarf's. In a corner, a statue of the Virgin and Child is mounted on another tree stump. "*Salva a tu Pueblo que clama a ti,*" it says underneath. On the altar run the words "*Madre de todos, Estrella del Mar, ruega por nosotros.*" As blustery winds whistle through the cracks in the logs, this place, at the windswept

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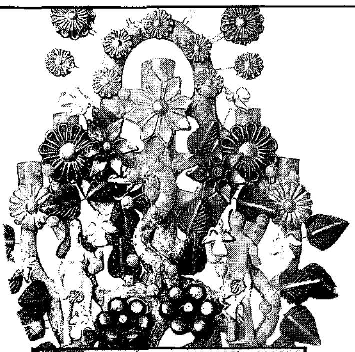

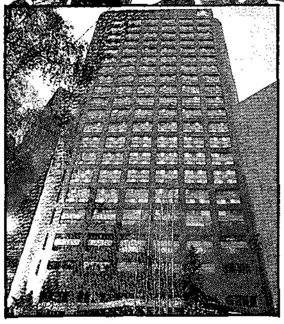

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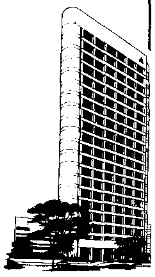

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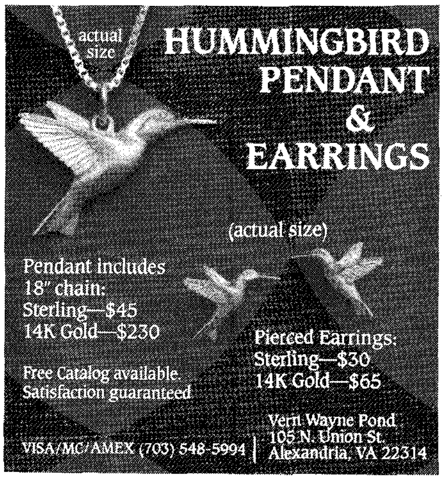

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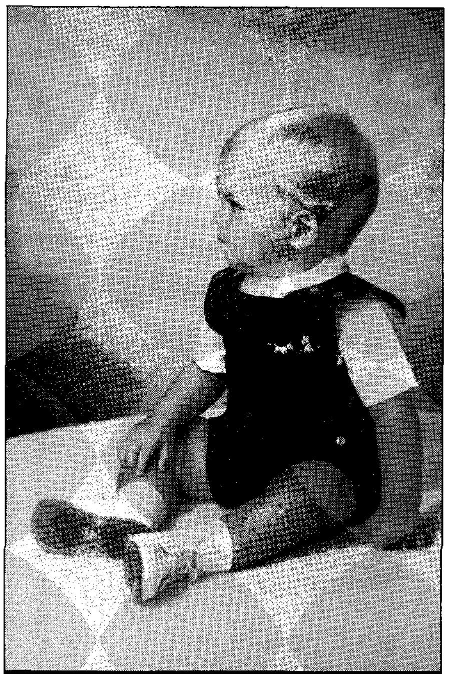

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edge of the known world, with penguins popping up from minefields, seems a good spot from which to send one's prayers to Heaven. Outside again, we press our collars tight against the cold and begin the slippery trek down to the beach, where the Zodiacs wait to ferry us, hungry and tired, back to the ship.

After breakfast, I crawl into bed to sleep. The ship starts up, and soon it is plunging again. Camera, binoculars, books, watch, papers skid across the desk and shelves and hit the floor, one at a time. The waves crash against the ship with such fury that when they hit the portholes they explode like cannon shot. All those sea movies, with their relentless creaking and swaying, were right—the ship creaks like a new shoe. Lying in bed, bolstered by a pillow at each side, to keep me from rolling out, I look hard at the cabin walls, trying to grip them with my eyes. Their cream-colored ersatz marbling is supposed to look randomly done with a plasterer's knife, but a horse's head, the face of a man with a mustache, and three penguins walking single file repeat. (In his notebooks Leonardo tells his students to stare at the stains in a marble wall until they see a world reveal itself, and centuries later Alain Robbe-Grillet began a novel in a similar way.)

When we are summoned to lifeboat drill, I stagger upstairs with the others, clinging to the handrails. Tucked between most railings and walls are seasickness bags. Some people carry their own. Seasickness is the sole topic of conversation as we wait for drill. I begin a bout of yawning I can't explain; my gorge starts to rise, and I swallow it. When the drill ends, everyone rushes for the cabins. But on the way I stagger to the ship's stern, and there I find a scene right out of storybooks: albatrosses, sooty shearwaters, and white-chinned petrels slide across the keel, banking, wheeling, stalling, climbing, touching their wing tips to the whitecaps, rushing low through the spray, skidding, diving, soaring.

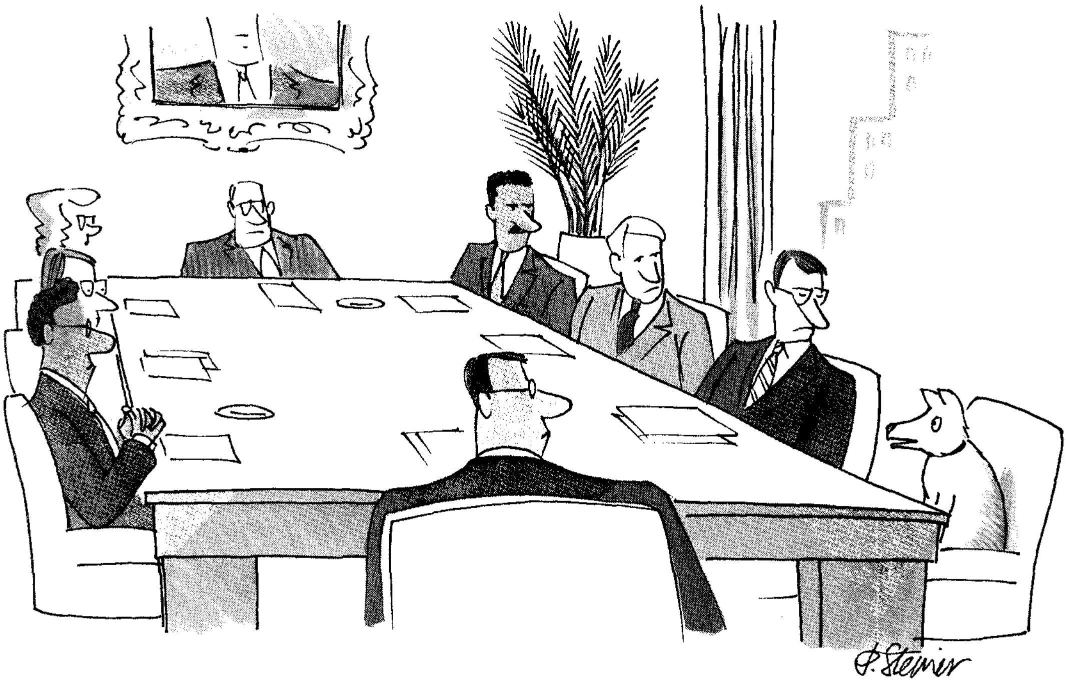
At twelve-thirty, lunch is announced over the intercom, and also the news that the seas are too rough for a planned afternoon landing. The waves are wild and rollicking, rearing up higher than the sides of the ship. A calm, good-tempered voice on the intercom announces that because of the "swell" the afternoon's lectures have been postponed. So have the captain's welcoming cocktail party and dinner. A stewardess stops by with a plate of crackers and a cup of tea for me. Even she is feeling seasick. If I chew the saltines very slowly, I discover, they will stay down. They remind me of the biscuits that the explorers in the Antarctic's heroic age relied on as a staple of their diet, along with pemmican, sugar, tea, and cocoa. Hardship didn't stop the early explorers; indeed, it seems to have been a lure. As rough as the waters feel, we are actually experiencing the notorious Drake Passage in one of its calmer moods. Most people keep to their cabins, and miss meals; some bundle up in parkas and blankets and lie out in the open in deck chairs. Stalwart birders and those with enviable sea legs pass the crossing on the observation bridge, binoculars pressed against their eyes like the fists of sleepy children. We are an odd lot of bird-mad travellers. There are doctors of every denomination, lawyers, anthropologists, professors, an Assistant Secretary of State (in the Carter Administration), a venture capitalist, a psychologist, a painter, professional photographers, middle-income couples who have saved for years to make the trip, and wealthy tourists, one of whom, when I asked what she did in Marin County, had the candor to reply, "Oh, I don't have to do anything." The average age is between sixty and seventy, and most of the people are retired.

On the observation bridge, between bird-spottings, a radiologist and a physicist discuss subatomic theory, string theory, and the Michelson-Morley experiment. "Einstein woke up the physicists from their dogmatic slumber," the radiologist says.

"Storm petrel," the physicist says, and both follow with binoculars as a petrel fall-swoops and then skids out of sight. "I think Bertrand Russell said if he had to do it over again he'd be a physicist," the physicist continues. "There comes that moment of yearning to tie your tent to the pegs of existence."

The other man nods.

Early in the morning, we reach the Antarctic Convergence, a meeting of the freezing Antarctic sea and the warmer waters of the north, which reveals itself as a line of foam with fog and mist and large flocks of seabirds moving in and out across a five-mile width. In our wake fly Wilson's storm petrels, which tap-dance right on top of the waves; black-and-white-splotched pintados; tiny black-bellied storm petrels; Antarctic prions, sieving the surface for food; stubby-winged diving petrels; and huge wandering albatrosses, which seem not to flap at all but to carry chunks of the sky on their wings. Minke, humpback, and southern bottle-nosed whales cross our path from time to time, and so do hourglass dolphins. We scout the water keenly for penguins but see none. The waves rear up on either side of the ship, cup us in thick green hands, and hurl us forward into another pair of waiting hands, which hurl us forward yet again. Night falls late and suddenly, without the usual pastel preamble of twilight.



"May I offer a very different scenario?"

• •

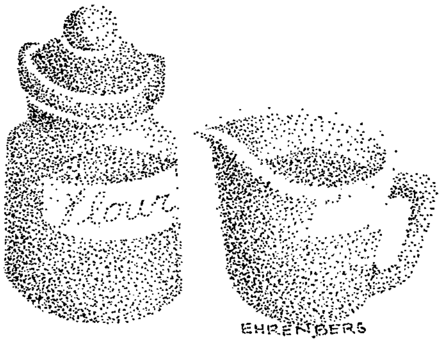
AT first light, in calmer seas, I open the two porthole covers like a second pair of eyes, and look out onto Antarctica for the first time. White upon white with white borders is all I expect to see, but instead colossal icebergs of palest blue and mint green float across the vista. Beyond them, long chalky cliffs stretch out of view. Throwing on a parka, I race upstairs to the deck and look all around. As far as I can see in any direction, icebergs meander against a backdrop of tall, crumbly Antarctic glaciers, most of which are still pure and unexplored. Human feet have not touched the glaciers I see; nor have many pairs of eyes beheld them. In various ways, the Antarctic is a world of suspended animation. It is suspended between outer space and the fertile continents. It is suspended in time—without a local civilization to make history. Civilization has been brought to it; it has never sustained any of its own. It is suspended in a hanging nest of world politics. When things die in the Antarctic, they decay very slowly; what has been is still here and will always be, unless we interfere. "Interfere" is such a simple word for what is happening: the ozone hole, the greenhouse effect, disputes over territory, pollution, mining. Who actually discovered Antarctica we may never know. We remember the Shackletons and the Scotts, but it was the whalers and sealers, not the explorers, who really opened up the Antarctic. Because the whalers and sealers didn't blab about their good hunting grounds, they have sifted through the seams of history.

Soon we drop anchor at Harmony Cove, Nelson Island, in the South Shetland Islands, whose ice cliffs are layered with volcanic ash from the Deception Island eruption of 1970. Piling into the Zodiacs, we dash toward a cobble beach, where one of the crew, who has gone ashore early, has spelled out "LANDING" in stones against the snow. A blue odalisque of ice floats offshore. Hundred-foot white glacial cliffs stand next to huge rooms of aquamarine ice. A small welcoming party of gentoo penguins, ashore to feed their waiting chicks, waddles close to look us over. One penguin tilts its head one way, then the other, as it stares at me. This makes the bird look like an art dealer thinking and appraising, but it is because penguins don't have binocular vision that they turn one eye to an object, then the other, to see it properly. Although they see very well underwater, they don't need long vision when they're on land. The last time I saw a look quite like that gentoo's was in the new Penguin House at the Central Park Zoo. There, in a shower of artificial Antarctic light, in a display created by a theatrical-lighting designer, gentoos and chinstraps eyed the crowd of people watching them, including several of Manhattan's homeless, who were using the Penguin House as a favorite lounge.

A saying has it that "there are two kinds of penguins in the Antarctic—the white ones coming toward you, and the black ones going away from you." All penguins' bodies are essentially black and white, in a pattern known as countershading. Their white bellies blend in with the shimmery light filtering through the water, and make them less likely to be spotted from below when they're in the ocean. Their black backs make them harder to spot from above as they fly through murky waters. To krill the white belly of the penguin looks like a pale orb above it, as harmless as the sky. To a leopard seal the black back of the penguin looks like a shadow on the ocean bottom, unpalatable. Researchers found that if they marked penguins with aluminum bands, the tags flashed, and leopard seals could spot the penguins only too easily. A lot of the study birds were killed, and the researchers had to switch to black tags. Another advantage of being black and white is that if the birds are too hot they can turn their white parts to the sun and reflect heat, while if they're too cool they can turn their black parts to the sun and absorb heat. Because most of a swimming penguin's body is below water, it's the head that has developed interesting designs and colors. A field guide to penguins would need to show you only the heads. Adélies (named after Adélie Land, a stretch of Antarctic coast below Australia which was itself named after Adélie Dumont d'Urville, the wife of the nineteenth-century French explorer Jules-Sébastian-César Dumont d'Urville, who first sighted it; among Captain d'Urville's other accomplishments was sending the Venus de Milo to the Louvre) have entirely black heads with chalk-white eye rings. They are the little men in tuxedos we see in cartoons. Rock-hoppers have bright-red eyes, long yellow and black head feathers, which look like a crewcut that has been allowed to grow out, and thick yellow satanic eyebrows, which slant up and away from their eyes, giving their faces an expression that says, "I dare you!" Chinstraps get their name from a helmet of black feathers which seems to be attached by a thin black strap across their white throats; their amber eyes, outlined in thick black, look Egyptian. Emperors have black heads, a tawny stripe on the bill, and a bib of egg-yolk yellow around their necks and cheeks. The most flamboyant of all, king penguins have a large velvety-orange comma on each cheek, as if they were always in the act of being quoted about something; a throbbing orange at the neck melts into radiant yellow; and on either side of the bill a comet of apricot or lavender flies toward the mouth. Fairy penguins are tiny and blue-headed. Each of the seventeen species of penguins, though essentially black and white, differs from all the others in head pattern.

Gentoos feed their chicks at intervals of between eighteen and twenty-four hours, and the group of parents has just arrived, their fat bellies crammed with fish and krill. Though quiet and friendly, they keep moving just out of our reach. Native to the Antarctic and the sub-Antarctic, the gentoo is white-breasted and black-backed, like all the other penguin species, but has a white bonnet on its head. Along with Adélies and chinstraps, gentoos belong to the genus *Pygoscelis*, meaning "brush-tailed," and are so called because they have long, paintbrush-shaped tails. They are shy, docile penguins, whose chicks grow slowly, staying close to a parent's warm body for weeks after hatching. The name gentoo comes from a British Museum man: he received a gentoo skin from an Antarctic explorer, thought that it was a new species of bird, and decided to suppress the information for a while; he later went off to Papua New Guinea, and when he returned he described the gentoo as coming from there, naming it after the Gentoo, a religious sect on Papua New Guinea.

As we straggle along the shore toward some granite outcroppings where penguins nest, two large brown birds begin dive-bombing forays. This is our first close encounter with skuas, the baby penguins' nemesis, and I hold an arm above my head, because I'm told that skuas, like lightning, strike at the highest spot. They can pick an animal's eyes out before it knows what has happened. Hawklike, cunning, and brave, they are the ace predators of sick or abandoned young penguins. Some claim that skuas divide up a penguin rookery into thousand-pair lots, and that if you want a quick population count of a penguin rookery all you need to do is count the skuas and multiply by two thousand. A skua will carefully monitor its section of a rookery, spot a deserted chick, and knock the bird on the back of the head to kill it, then consume almost every scrap. When it devours an adult bird, it eats the viscera first, turning the carcass inside out like a sleeve, and leaving only the head, skin, and bones. A big skua lands right in front of us, spreads its wings, and noisily proclaims its territory. Then we see why it's so anxious: a fluffy skua chick, with its head tucked into its shoulders, scurries away in the other direction and crouches. Another adult skua arrives, and both parents try to draw our attention away from their chick.

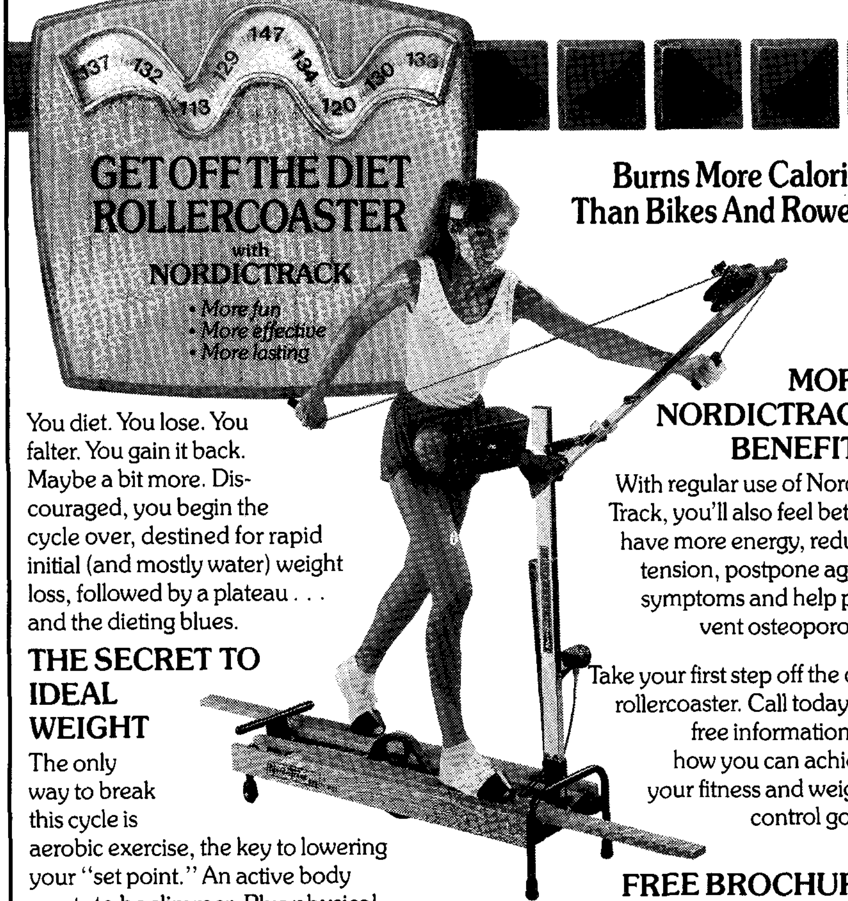


A little farther on, we find a small rookery of chinstraps, which look like a gathering of crosswalk guards, and one stands with its flipper out straight, as if it were signalling a left turn. Another, though, lies on its stomach and turns the soles of its feet up to cool off. Moving its flippers, it reveals an underside that has gone pink in the penguin equivalent of a blush. It's a warm day for them in Antarctica. A group of gentoo penguins ambles by, going anywhere, going nowhere. Penguins are born followers. If one begins to move with purpose, the others fall in behind. "Those poor penguins, living in this awful cold!" one woman laments in a Southern drawl, pulling her red parka tight around her neck and then dragging a knitted cap down almost over her eyes. Actually, polar penguins rarely mind the cold. Quite the opposite. They tend to overheat. Being birds, penguins are warm-blooded; that is, they're able to make their own heat and carry it with them wherever they go, instead of taking on the temperature of their environment. Of course, keeping warm does require special techniques, and penguins have evolved thick layers of blubber, which their bodies make from krill and planktonic oils. Blubber conducts heat very badly, so a layer of it beneath the skin is an excellent insulator, and also serves as fuel for the long, cold breeding season. The farther south you go, the bigger the penguins get, because big animals find it easier to stay warm. About a third of the weight of emperor penguins, which live in the coldest regions of all, is blubber. As anyone who skis or spends much time outdoors in the winter knows, air is one of the best insulators; travellers to the Antarctic are advised to wear many layers of clothing with plenty of air in between them. Penguins accomplish the same thing by having tightly overlapping feathers, which don't ruffle very easily and, as a result, trap a layer of warm air against the skin. Besides, each feather has fluffy down at the base of its shaft, and the down layer adds more insulation. Penguins are watertight and airtight, and are thought to have more feathers per square inch than most other birds. The feathers are shiny, long, and curved, and they overlap like carefully laid roof shingles. Dipping its beak into the oil gland at the base of the tail, a penguin spreads a layer of oil on the feathers to keep them slick and tight. Of course, the feathers do become tattered over a year or so, and then the bird must molt. If it molted gradually, it would lose its waterproofing over a long period, so it goes through all the steps of molting at the same time—a process that takes about twenty to thirty days. New feathers grow in underneath the ones that are molting, and actually push the old ones out. While that is going on, the penguin looks scruffy and slightly crazed, as if it were ripping its feathers out in some avian delirium. What is worse, since penguins aren't waterproof while they're molting, they can't go hunting food in the ocean, and they live off their fat. A penguin loses about thirty per cent of its body weight during a molt, and is bound to be hungry.

There are few things as ridiculous as penguins suffering the equivalent of heatstroke in the middle of the coldest place on earth. All around the chinstrap rookery, overheated penguins are resorting to what look like vaudeville moves. They ruffle their feathers to release some of the hot insulating air next to the skin. They hold one flipper out, as if they were parking a 747, and then pirouette and signal a turn in the other direction. They flush pink under the wings, where capillaries swell with blood. They lie down on their bellies and stick their feet up behind them, to lose heat through the soles of their feet. They radiate heat through their few featherless zones—usually around the eyes and feet. A large adult suddenly ruffles up all over and extends its flippers at the same time, as if it were struck with a penguin form of the willies.

The cold, though, isn't really a problem. If the temperature drops very low (to around 15° F. with a strong wind), thousands of birds will huddle together to stay warm in what French researchers call *tortues*, or turtles. Using one another for insulation means they don't need to burn up their fat stores. A huddling bird loses only half as much weight as a bird braving the winds solo, because only a small portion of its body is exposed. It's a little like the insulation that apartment dwellers get from being surrounded by other apartments in their building.

"Come and look at this krill poop," Harrison says, bending down to consider some guano. "It's not very fresh. See those black spots in it?" He holds up a handful and smudges it between



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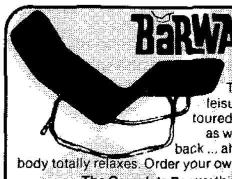

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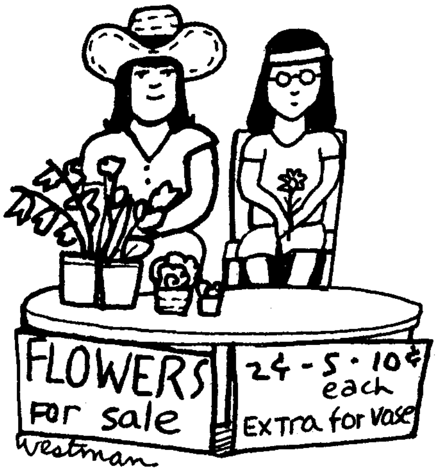
his fingers. "That's the eyes of krill, which are indigestible, like tomato seeds for us. When you see the ground stained red like this, you can be pretty sure it's a chinstrap or an Adélie rookery rather than a gentoo, because the chinstraps and Adélies eat krill and that makes them poop red. White poop comes from a diet of fish or squid. And green poop means that penguins are not eating at all; what you're seeing is bile." Across the hillside and around the large slabs of rock, the ground is stained pink, so if the rookery were deserted we could tell that chinstraps or Adélies had lived there. Most of the zoologists I know are necessarily coprophiles: a living system leaves its imprint on what passes through it.

Beyond the chinstrap rookery, molting elephant seals snooze on the shore. One often finds elephant seals with penguins, lying on the beach like old cast-off horsehair couches. They roll around on the sand together and roll against each other, to rub off their old fur, which wears out and has to be replaced each year. Pieces of molted fur and skin litter the beach. It takes seven or eight years for the long nose of the bulls to develop fully, and we see some pug-nosed ones here—young males, which will grow larger, although they're already around twelve feet long and weigh about three thousand pounds. A gang of chinstrap penguins strolls among them, seemingly without care. Sluggish as elephant seals may look, they can dive to more than three thousand feet to feed on squid and fish.

On a rise, three fur seals, a far different breed, sit up and stare aggressively as we pass. If they wanted to, they could gallop across the sand at great speed, tucking their pelvic girdles under and undulating like fast worms. Fur seals will attack a human being. Last year, a fur seal grabbed a lecturer as he was getting into a Zodiac, and punctured his lung. The man needed thirty-six stitches, and it took many months for the wound to heal, because fur seals have an enzyme in their mucus which keeps their bites from healing properly. "I hate these," one of the guides says under his breath. "I have nothing whatsoever against fur-seal coats. I tell you I'm sincere about this." A territorial male starts toward Stonehouse, and he claps his hands, shouts, and kicks black volcanic sand up at its face. It stops, huffs loudly, and sidles back where it came from.

Between two rock knobs, another chinstrap-penguin colony sits on red krill-stained rocks. Some nearby gentoos have chosen a flat shelf area to nest and breed on. Since chinstraps prefer rocks, and gentoos a flatter terrain, the two species can live in close quarters without competing for nesting sites. A baby gentoo puts its head up and makes a metallic gargling sound. The babies form little crèches with their flippers wrapped around one another, and achieve a look of intense mateyness. (Eider ducklings, young flamingos, and baby bats form crèches, too.) While the parent penguins are away hunting food, the babies are open to attack from skuas and other birds, and are a lot safer in a nursery of chicks. Not only is there strength in numbers but adults wandering through the crèches to feed their young can help to ward off the skuas. Returning from the sea, adult gentoos easily recognize their own babies, not only by their voices but by the pattern of white dots, bar over the eyes, and other characteristics that vary slightly from one individual to another. A chick flaps rubbery flippers; it takes time for the strong, hard swimming muscles of the adult to form. As immature birds, gentoos have a great tendency to wander, and may migrate as much as two hundred miles. In their second year, they will return to the rookery of their birth, ready to breed. However, the gentoo couples, once they're mated, don't necessarily go back to the same site each year to nest. Like most other penguins, gentoos take two to three weeks to build a nest and copulate, but they don't split up when the breeding season is over; they probably remain together as mates year-round. Gentoos are the most passive penguins, and perhaps that has been their undoing. There are only about forty thousand gentoos in the world.



In some areas, the ground is streaked with beautiful white star-bursts of squirted guano, so that it looks like a moonscape. And is it pungent! Sailors have been known to use the smell of a well-known rookery as a navigation aid, especially when fog is too thick for them to actually see any of the birds. In other areas, a pink tinge of algae glows beneath snow, which acts as a greenhouse. And there are places where frost polygons have turned the sod into a six-sided design. At the water's edge, a chinstrap raises its bill into the air, its air sacs puff up, and it works the bellows of its chest. Just offshore, a row of giant petrels waits for chicks to risk the waters. The range of light is so wide that it's hard for the eye to take everything in—the round, dark, wet rocks, the dazzling snow reflected by low clouds in a visual echo chamber of white.

On the ground lie the remains of a skua's breakfast: a pair of orange feet, a head wearing a chinstrap, and a partly stripped skeleton. Stonehouse picks up the half-eaten chinstrap and shows me the thick red ribbons that are salt glands, the flight muscles, the concertina ribs. He hands me a small white feather, revealing its main shaft, and then at its base a second feather of silky down.

"Why would this one have died?" I ask. "Why would a skua have singled it out?"

Turning the skeleton over, Stonehouse discovers that the lower bill is deformed—bent at a ninety-degree angle. "You occasionally see penguins with deformed bills like this," he says. "There's no way they can feed correctly, but even if they did manage to feed they wouldn't be able to preen themselves, so they would get heavily infested with lice. It's very sad—like seeing a deformed and neglected child. And that's a very simple, small thing to go wrong, when you think about it—just a misshapen lower bill. But the chick would lead a difficult life for about nine months and then die of starvation. Before that could happen, though, a skua would usually find it. Chicks running around without parents soon die, too, and they eventually form the debris on the floor of this colony."

Looking closely at the ground, I see a long scatter of bones, and am stunned. We are standing in an ancient cemetery. A penguin colony lives on top of a graveyard, which may be thousands of years old. Under the birds' feet and nests lie the frozen, partly mummified remains of dead penguins. The cold preserves their carcasses as long as three thousand years. Most penguin babies die on land, and no one removes their skeletons; the bones gradually sink into the permafrost, and look like designs in millefiori glass paperweights. A wind gust sends blowing feathers into the air in what looks like the aftermath of a pillow fight. Penguins molt each year—some species even shed parts of their bills. The ground litter includes not just corpses and pungent guano but also feathers, blood, spilled krill, molted elephant-seal skin and hair, and miscellaneous bits of animals too dismembered for an amateur to identify.

Seeing Stonehouse with the chinstrap skeleton in his hands, his wife, Sally, walks up and smiles. She has a lovely English complexion, which has gone ruddy in the brisk Antarctic air, and a few wisps of brown hair stray from under her knitted hat. "When we lived in New Zealand, we were so used to Bernard's bringing home dead finnies," she says cheerfully. "If we could find a dead penguin, he was always so pleased."

At this point, a lone male chinstrap tosses his helmeted head to the sky, arches his flippers back, and trumpets an "ecstatic display" that could stop a train. His chest and throat ripple rhythmically as he calls, with all his soul, hoping to lure a willing female by telling her that he's available and ready with a cozy nesting site. Penguins may not be thinkers, but their instincts guide them through the complexities of the landscape and their hormones. An ecstatic display sounds both desperate and automatic. It may happen at any time—sometimes with good reason, sometimes by mistake, sometimes in a chorus of tens of thousands screaming at the top of their lungs the equivalent of "Tell me you love me! I said, 'Tell me you love me!' " It's a little like overhearing thousands of actors auditioning simultaneously for a Sam Shepard play. All summer, the frantic ecstasy of penguins fills the Antarctic air. Plighting their troth, an Adélie pair will do an ecstatic display, and then the male will give the female what clearly is to her eye a perfect and precious

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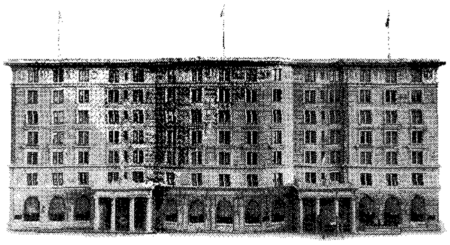
go back for annual visits."



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"We are encouraged that there is now considerable interest in conducting research on women artists living at the turn of the Century. I'm especially excited about our show this summer called 'A Woman's View,' which features 90 paintings by more than 30 artists. I think a lot of people will be stunned by the quality. Our gallery has sponsored over 100 solo shows by women since 1900, and our hope is to once again focus attention on this very overlooked group."

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stone. The actual copulation, which takes only seconds, has been described as a "cloacal kiss." Foreplay is everything—a complex drama of eye contact and body language. Courting males repeatedly bow to females, and the females have their own balletic gestures to use in reply.

Among rocks covered with green algae, thick whips of red algae stream in water. Both fur seals and Weddell seals laze along the shoreline, and Stonehouse strolls over to photograph them. A chinstrap sways back on its heels and sits with its toes off the ground. A fur seal bluffs a threat, and Stonehouse throws pebbles until it retreats. "Fur seals, you know, have a bearlike ancestor, whereas those Weddell seals are descended from an otterlike ancestor," he says, pointing to a pair of reclining seals with small, mottled heads and huge spaniel eyes—eyes that are round, as dark as peat bogs, and perfectly adorable. I suspect that human beings are predisposed to like animals with large eyes. "They are *very* different," he continues. "We think they are similar because they look so different from other animals, but that really says more about us, and our desire to group things together, than it does about them."

From iridescent-shelled limpets to wingless Antarctic flies, from shrimplike krill to the many species of seals, whales, porpoises, and birds, life teems around the penguins. Antarctica has an area of five and a half million square miles, of which only about two per cent isn't covered by ice, and where small amounts of liverworts, algae, lichens, and mosses can grow. Large animals like penguins, seals, whales, and flying birds migrate, using the lands of Antarctica to raise young and breed, but feeding in the waters. To see most of Antarctica's permanent land animals you need a microscope or a magnifying glass: they are arthropods, which live in the soil and moss; various species of mites; metezoa; tardigrades, which are tiny invertebrates that live in water; protozoa; worms; crustaceans; and one species of wingless fly, *Belgica antarctica*, which grows to a length of about half an inch. The wingless fly is the largest full-time resident of Antarctica. The frozen waters house a mysterious, transparent ice fish, which has no hemoglobin, or red pigment, in its blood; a special blood protein acts as an antifreeze, so that ice crystals don't form even though the fish lives among ice floes. But mainly Antarctica supports huge herds of migrating animals—like the penguins, which come to feed in its crystal lagoons and raise young on its volcanic shores before returning to their vast home in the sea.

EARLIER today, we passengers heard about an Argentine oil spill nearby. The Bahia Paraíso, a supply ship carrying diesel fuel, jet fuel, compressed gases, and gasoline to the Argentine base Esperanza, ran onto the rocks. The ship was also carrying passengers. The captain had ignored warnings from local scientists and sailed into a dangerous area called "the pinnacles," not marked on Argentine charts but clearly shown on others. When the ship ran aground, everybody climbed into inflatable lifeboats. Fortunately, two tourist ships—the Illiria and the World Discoverer's sister ship, the Society Explorer—were in the vicinity, and they changed course to rescue the stranded passengers, towing the lifeboats to Palmer Station. But an estimated three hundred thousand gallons of diesel fuel have spilled into the waters; some penguins, south polar skuas, and krill were killed outright; and sealed barrels of oil were turned loose to detonate like time bombs and contaminate unknown shores. We have heard a rumor that the United Nations is trying to raise money to remove the young penguins that haven't yet entered the water. But anyone who knows penguins knows that such an effort is futile. Penguins come back to their home rookery to breed, so if they avoid the oil now they will find it when they return home. The much ballyhooed oil-eating detergent we read about won't solve the problem, either; it grabs hold of the oil and drags it to the bottom of the ocean. That may save the life-forms on the surface but not those at the bottom. At the very least, the descending oil and detergent will disturb the krill, squid, and fish on which the penguins feed. Although the sea freezes at about 29° F., and doesn't rise beyond 32° F., it makes an ideal home for phytoplankton, the microscopic plants that are at the bottom of the food chain in the Antarctic.

The ecosystem here is a simple one, in the sense that the food chain is very short, with only four or five steps. But, contrary to what one might think, colder waters tend to be much more fertile than tropical waters. Because of the short summer season and its intense sunlight, a tremendous amount of photosynthesis takes place, and great seas of plant life bloom. That means that tiny, grazing invertebrates have an unlimited supply of food, and their population explodes. And that means that there is a huge population of krill in the Antarctic, on which other creatures feed. There aren't as many types of animals as you might find in warmer waters, but their numbers are vast. And it all begins with phytoplankton and krill. The krill hang underneath the ice floes like upside-down sheep, and graze on the plant life beneath them. This is where the krill are in the winter. In the austral summer, when the ice melts, huge shoals of krill become visible in the waters, and whales feed on them. Weddell seals and penguins that breed in summer feed on them. Fish, too, feed on the krill, and then squid feed on the fish, penguins feed on the squid, leopard seals and killer whales feed on the penguins, and so it goes on. As Gregory Bateson once said, the world is indeed only a small tide pool: disturb one part and the rest is threatened.

Thinking of all this, I say to Stonehouse, "Suppose it turns out to be a bad year for krill."

"Penguins don't trawl for krill, the way whales do," he explains. "They catch them one at a time. Think about that. One study has shown that breeding gentoo penguins, when they're feeding, have to catch a krill every six seconds to eat enough to survive and rear their young. If it's not a good krill season, and the krill are small, then a penguin has to catch twice as many, in twice as many movements. That uses up a vast amount of energy, and they don't have much to spare."

"At least, the ones here will probably make it," I remark.

Stonehouse stops, looks at me kindly,

puts a hand on my shoulder, and turns me to face the large, sprawling rookeries of noisy, courting, chick-rearing, squabbling, feeding penguins.

"For every hundred chicks we see there and there and there, only twenty-four will come back," he says. "They die mostly of starvation. The chicks don't always know how to fish. Or they may be abandoned too early by their parents. Or hatched too late in the season. Or malformed. Or underweight. Or the sheathbills we can see flying about may attack them. Sheathbills often attack penguins feeding their young, but not to grab the baby. What the sheathbill wants is the krill the parent has collected. So it flies right at the penguins." He uses one hand to demonstrate. "That startles them, and causes the parent's regurgitated krill to splatter all over the ground, where the sheathbill can get it. Or the skuas may kill a chick. Or a leopard seal may. The natural wastage among penguins is very high indeed. And human beings have been the most skillful penguin predators of all."

"That's a terrible waste, in terms of your potential."

• •

He is right, of course. Early visitors to penguin islands were so thrilled to find fresh food that they feasted on great herds of penguins. They boiled down penguins to make oil, and they collected their guano (an Inca word) for fertilizer. When penguins are in danger, they instinctively leap onto the land, and penguin hunters walked right up to them and clubbed them to death. Before Europeans "discovered" penguins, South American Indians used their hides for purses, slippers, and clothing, and ate their eggs. Penguin eggs have red yolks, because of the orangy krill they feed on (just as flamingos have pinkish feathers because of their diet), and translucent whites. There are records of early European ships' collecting fifty barrels of penguin eggs at a time. Sir Francis Drake reports killing three thousand penguins in a single day. In 1867, one trading company recorded boiling down four hundred and five thousand six hundred birds for their oil. Probably the most famous penguin-oil distillery was on Macquarie Island, southeast of Tasmania, and visitors can still see its boilers. Although fishing for penguins is now outlawed, they are still endangered by oil spills and other forms of pollution. DDT metabolites have been found in the tissues of Adélie penguins. As Roger Tory Peterson has observed, "Penguins may eventually prove to be the litmus paper of the sea, an indicator of the health of our watery planet."

"What was that sound?" I say. "A gunshot?"

Stonehouse looks around carefully, scanning the rookeries. "Possibly an exploding egg. Yes, I know that may seem strange, but it happens all the time. Addled or rotten eggs will begin to stink and then become explosive. Sometimes you can hear the explosion, and then you'll see a very puzzled penguin and know what happened—he was incubating a bad egg, and it blew up under him."

On our way back to the waiting Zodiacs, keeping an eye out for a puzzled-looking penguin, we pass a wallow of elephant seals, and their belching stench hits us like a mallet. We see leopard seals cruising offshore. Fur seals may take an occasional penguin, and even wait at the shoreline for penguins that come stumbling through the surf, but the real penguin killers are leopard seals. One was found to have the remains of eighteen Adélie penguins in its stomach. When a leopard seal grabs a penguin, it beats the penguin to pieces on the surface of the water, and the smacking sound is audible for considerable distances. Roger Tory Peterson reports that penguins have a warning "babble" that "plainly means 'leopard seal.' " Small wonder that penguins are so tentative about entering the sea. Any dark object in the surf may be a leopard seal. Or any clapping sound, as of flippers hitting the water. The leopard seal is beautiful, as predators frequently are: it has a snakelike head, with huge canine teeth; a slender grayish-black back, which becomes silver-gray, or even bluish, on the belly; and tawny spots on its underside. The males grow to be nine feet long and weigh around seven hundred pounds, and the females are even larger—ten feet long and up to a thousand pounds. Leopard-seal ultrasonic "chirps" have been recorded—noises similar to the echolocation sounds of bats—and some scientists think that the seals must be able to echolocate when they feed under the dark winter ice. Even if they don't echolocate, they're expert at telling the direction of

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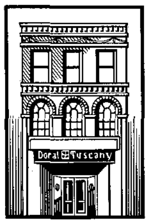

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underwater sounds. They are supreme predators, and as we climb back into the Zodiacs to return to the ship we watch them with horror and awe.

SOMEWHERE along the way, we have lost the nighttime. Where did we lose it? It may have been in a deserted whaling station in whose smoky hall we ate a barbecue of reindeer meat and danced to Glenn Miller. Or at a Polish station, whose greenhouses grew snapdragons and tomatoes. Or at the volcanic ring of Deception Island. Or watching rippling terraces of chinstrap penguins go about their lapidary business. Or at a small British base, Signy, whose young men had not seen strangers, or women, for nearly two years. (Visiting with us in the ship's lounge, some of them were trembling; we sent them away with handshakes, good wishes, and sacks of potatoes, onions, and other fresh food.) Or it may have been at the Valentine's Day dance, on seas so rough that dancers held onto the ceiling. Or on Elephant Island, a forbidding snag of mountain but a thriving chinstrap rookery, where Shackleton and his men landed after their trials on the pack ice. Or at an eerie, deserted penguin rookery where watching a lone penguin chick face the death machine of a rampaging skua tortured our hearts. Or among guano-thick beaches where waves of hungry penguins bobbed in the sea, and babies clamored to be fed. Or it may have been while we listened to David Kaplan, the assistant cruise director and a fine pianist, put on concerts of Debussy, Haydn, Bach, and Beethoven against a backdrop of sunstruck glaciers.

Now we live only in a late twilight. Icebergs cluster around us like statuary as the ship sails through the Gerlache Strait, which separates the Antarctic Peninsula from Brabant and Anvers Islands. Each narrow waterway seems to lead into another one, but finally we sail through the Lemaire Channel, which narrows to a mere sixteen hundred feet at its southern end. This is the penguin's world. On either side of the channel, glaciers spill into the sea, jagged mountain peaks rise into the clouds, and icebergs roam free. In the channel, the water looks like lucid tar with icebergs of all sizes drifting through it, their white tops a thin reflection of life, their blue bases large and pale and inscrutable. The brilliant white of an iceberg lies on a thick, wide base of blue that might be as ancient as the earth. The icebergs take all shapes, and some have fissures through which a searing blue light shines. The water in the wake of an iceberg looks like oiled silk, because its surface has been smoothed by the ice's palm. On both sides of the ship, black, jagged, ice-drizzled mountains are reflected in the mirror surface of the water. On a small berg, five gentoo penguins sit, their white bonnets sparkling in the sun. On another small berg, their potential death lounges—a leopard seal, sprawling on its side and idly scratching its flank with a five-fingered paw.

"*Seehund*," a woman from Frankfurt says solemnly. We are all on the side of the penguins here, though nature should have no partisans, no sides, no center, except the center that is forever shifting, as Emerson said—a center that moves within circles and circles that move.

Great tongues of ice stretch out from the continent and speak in a language like music—with no words but with undeniable meaning. And, like music, it's a language we don't have to learn in order to be profoundly moved by it—we creatures who do not just use our environment but also appreciate it, admire it, even worship it. True, we kill other life-forms to survive, but we feel a kinship to them, we apologize for stealing their life from them. We are the most vital creatures ever to inhabit the earth, and the one truth we live by is that life loves life. Still, nature proceeds "red in tooth and claw," as Tennyson said. This becomes simpler to see in a simpler environment. When you walk through a penguin rookery, where the underweight chicks stand doomed, and the skuas maneuver like custodians of death, pages of Darwin's "Origin of Species" spring to life in front of you. All the cozy denials we use as shields fall aside.

The sky is blue today and the air astringent, like an ammonia vapor. The sun pours down but has no heat, and the ice mountains occasionally reveal weavings of blue and green. After the darkness of winter, the five months of light don't warm things up much. The ice reflects the heat back into the sky. Most of my fellow-passengers now have greatly dilated pupils, a side effect of wearing a scopolamine patch behind one ear to ward off seasickness. It makes them look a little like zombies, but it allows them to take in big eye gulps of light. In Zodiacs, we drift along the peninsula, through an ice-sculpture garden. Herodotus said you never step in the same stream twice. The Antarctic version of that is never seeing the same iceberg twice. Because the icebergs are always changing, one sees a unique and personal iceberg, which no one else has ever seen or ever will see. Icebergs are not always smooth. Many have textures—waffle patterns, pockmarks—and some look pounded by Near Eastern metalsmiths. One newly calved iceberg lies like a chunk of glass honeycomb, spongy from being underwater. (At some point, it was other side up.) Another has beautiful blue ridges like muscles running along one flank. So many icelets thicken the water, each one quivering with sparkle, that the sea looks like aluminum foil being shaken in the sun. There are baths of ice with blue lotion, ice grottoes, ice curled round like the fleecy pelt of a lamb, razor-backed ice, sixteen swans on an ice merry-go-round, ice pedestals, ice combs, ice dragons with ice wings spread, an ice garden where icebergs grow and die, ice tongs with blue ice between their claws, an ice egret stretching ice wings and a long, rippling ice neck out of the water. Apricot light spills over distant snowcapped mountains. Wedges of peppermint-blue ice drift past. Behind us, the Zodiac leaves a froth like white petticoats. And, farther behind, dark shapes arch out of the water—penguins feeding, oblivious of what we call beauty.

Before I came to the Antarctic, I thought that penguins lived in a world of extreme sensory deprivation, but instead I've found that they inhabit a landscape of the greatest sensuality. Many people have called Antarctica a wasteland, but it is robust with life.

And the range of colors is breathtaking; though subtle, it has changing depths and illuminations, like flesh tones. There are many colors in the ever-blue sky, and in the cloud formations, the muted light, the midnight sun, the auroras dancing over the still waters, with their icebergs and their areas that sparkle like hand mirrors, through which black-and-white penguins dive. Who would have imagined the depth of blue in the icebergs, which look like sugar-frosted cakes with muted sunlight bursting off them? Or their massiveness? Sitting alongside an iceberg, you can't see around it in either direction. When you wake up, the water may be so smooth that you could use it as a mirror, and four hours later the wind can be howling at ninety knots. And it's just as beautiful at ninety knots as it was in crystal calm. Huge ice caverns form arches of pastel ice. Glare has so many moods that it seems another pure color. The mountains, glaciers, and fjords bulge and roll through an endless display of interflowing shapes. The continent keeps turning its shimmery hips and jutting up its hard pinnacles of ice in a sensual display of rolling, sifting, brilliant landscapes. There is such liquefaction to its limbs, and yet it also can be blindingly abstract, harrowing and remote, so that you feel you are on another planet, so far from human life that the desolation and iciness make you want to do impetuous, life-affirming things: commit acts of love, skip Zodiacs over the bays at dangerous speeds, reach a loved one by way of satellite, work out in the gym on thrones of steel until your muscles quit, drink all night, be passionate and daring, renew the outlines of your humanity.

We pause at Paradise Bay, where blue-eyed shags nest along the cliffs, a whale swims at a distance, penguins porpoise to feed, and crabeater seals laze on small icebergs, red krill juice dripping down their chins. Through pale-green water, utterly clear and calm, a gray rocky bottom shines, along with red and brown seaweeds, and yellow patches of blooming phytoplankton. A loud explosion startles us, and, turning, we see ice breaking off a glacier to become an iceberg, which will float for perhaps four years before it succumbs to the sea. I look down through fathoms of crystal water to large, smooth rocks on the bottom. Suddenly, an eight-foot leopard seal swivels below us, surfaces to breathe, cuts a fast turn, and begins circling the Zodiac, round and round, underneath it and alongside. Each time the seal spins underwater, large blue air bubbles rise to the surface like jellyfish. Mouth open, baring sharp yellow teeth, it lunges up through the water and bites a pontoon of the Zodiac. "Back away from the edge!" David Kaplan, who's at the helm, says in contained urgency, and all twelve of us passengers lean away from the attacking seal, which could leap out of the water and seize any of us by an arm, pull us under. Circling, fast, beautiful, wild, ferocious, it spins below, dives, and leaps to the surface. It is stalking us as if we were penguins on an ice floe. We who live at the top of our food chain rarely get a chance to feel like prey, to watch a predator maneuver around us with a deftness that is instinctive, cunning, and persistent—and live to tell about it.

"Just an average day in Paradise," Kaplan says, brightening the motor and heading for shore. We climb out at an abandoned Argentine base. As clouds drift behind the peninsula, the continent itself appears to be moving—as, of course, it is. On a rock ledge, an Antarctic tern—a small white bird with a black cap and a bright-red beak and matching red feet—thrills the sky with song. A teal vein of copper ore cascades down the rocks among fiery orange lichen and green moss. As the rest of our party climbs a steep slope of glacier to the top of a mountain where a wooden cross has been planted, I stand like a sentinel, as still as a penguin, and watch my kind struggle up the hill from the sea. Across the bay are snow mountains glazed in a dusky-pink light, and the water is cerulean. Gray clouds hang in front of and below the powdered tops of the mountains. The air is so pure that the clouds look cutout and solid, suspended by sleight of hand, a magician's trick. On the surface of the water, mirrors lie scattered where there is no ice to disrupt the flowing light. A blue iceberg shaped like open jaws a hundred feet high floats near shore. Corrugated-metal buildings shine brilliant orange. A long hem of brash ice undulates across the south end of the bay. Somewhere the leopard seal is looking for less elusive quarry, and will find it.

THE birders are up early as we approach Coronation Island, in the South Orkneys; they're desperate to spot an Antarctic petrel, a bird that looks like but is slightly larger than the many pintados, or painted petrels, swirling in small tornadoes behind the boat. Most Antarctic petrels are in their rookeries, as much as a hundred miles inland from the ice shelf. When one finally wings across the water, the birders go berserk.

"Oh! There it is! Beautiful!" a woman cries.

"Wow! The nape is almost buff!" an enraptured man says.

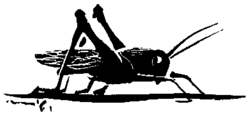
The colors of all the Antarctic petrels we see today are pale. The birds are in molt, a wonderful coffee-tan color, and are flapping a bit stiffly, because their new feathers aren't in yet. To see one or two so far out at this time of year is a bonus. Many of us, however, are looking not for petrels but for an even rarer sight—an emperor penguin, the largest of all penguins. Emperors can dive to nearly nine hundred feet to feed on squid, and stay submerged for nearly twenty minutes. Huge sentinels who stand in the snow like vigilant UFO watchers, they have the usual black-and-white coloring but also a spill of honey at their throats and cheeks. Unfortunately, their rookeries are too far south for us to see them on this trip. Emperor penguins are such altruistic parents—or fanatics, depending on your point of view—that they will pick up a frozen or ruined egg and try to incubate it, or try to incubate stones, or an old dead chick. An abandoned or wayward chick will immediately be adopted. Sometimes adults squabble so much over a chick that the chick gets hurt or killed in the process. Emperors rarely, if ever, touch bare ground. They live out their whole lives standing sentry on shelf ice or swimming in the ocean.

A small flock of Antarctic prions hydroplanes over the water, plowing a furrow through it. These birds use their tongues to sift krill and other small invertebrates into a feeding pouch below the bill; they feed the way baleen whales do.

"Bird alert! Bird alert!" sounds over the intercom, waking passengers from their slumber and early risers from their breakfasts. "E.P. alert! E.P. alert! A juvenile emperor penguin has been spotted off the stern of the boat!" Dozens of people jump out of bed and run to the stern, colliding with other people, who are frantically running up the stairs from their cabins. "Hold These Rails" it says on brass plates at each stairway on every deck, as if in rebuke to excited birders who have been turning the ship into an aviary. The stampede ends with a clash of bodies on the stern deck. And there it is: porpoising out of the water, it looks like part of an inner tube with a flash of yellow showing every now and again. Then it vanishes, and we are left standing quietly with our amazement. To glimpse an emperor penguin in the wild, feeding this far from its home, is like a benediction.

Stowing my binoculars, I go downstairs to eat breakfast, but I barely touch it. Despite elaborate, haute-cuisine meals, I've been losing weight at a reckless pace. It's as if I were being nourished so thoroughly through my senses that I feel too full to eat. And we still haven't even encountered king penguins, the species I came to know at Sea World, the most gaudily colored penguins of all. To find them we must sail again across galloping seas, and when at last we drop anchor, at Cooper Island, right at the tip of South Georgia, and climb into our Zodiacs, we realize that we have arrived at one of the most astonishing places on earth.

Our first sight of land is from the Zodiacs, on a rough sea that smacks them hard with each swell. The mountains of Cooper Island stretch high and green to ice-capped peaks. When the American ornithologist Robert Cushman Murphy visited it, in 1912, he called it "a stretch of the Alps in mid-ocean." Macaroni penguins, named after Yankee Doodle dandies, because they have orange spaghetti bangs hanging from their heads, clot the hillsides, and their collective clamor—part bray, part clack—resounds louder than the surf. Albatrosses, terns, petrels, and other birds swirl in relentless squadrons overhead, plane low over the water, squealing and chirping, and cluster on the hillside. Schools of macaroni penguins porpoise through the water all around our Zodiacs, which now seem to be boiling in a caldron full of penguins. Fur seals clamber up onto rock outcroppings near shore and make gargling barks. The whole scene glistens, fluorescent with life. So many animals are moving in the foreground and background that one's eyes strain to focus on both at once. It's like travelling through the middle of a pop-up storybook. Magic realism has sprung to life. In each cove, penguins leap out of the water like balls of solid rubber and land safely on the rocks as we stagger toward one stretch of shore after another, looking for a safe place to land. Finally, we head for a small, wave-tossed beach, hit hard, climb out fast, and let the Zodiacs return to deeper waters. Fur seals bask on the shore, some hidden behind large boulders, some sitting on top of thronelike tussocks. Above us, steeply tussocked cliffs give way to a high field, and beyond that stands a scree-torn mountain capped with snow.



Brittmarie, a Swedish-born climber from California, whose candor and zest I like, looks at me, then at the craggy bluffs overhead.

"Let's do it," I say, and we exchange grins.

Sneaking away far to the left, around the sleeping fur seals, we start climbing a steep rock creekbed.

"Three points!" she yells down to me as I scramble up on the slippery rocks. "Always be secure at three points!"

"Words to live by!" I call back.

Soon we find ourselves walled in by cliffs, with dense tussocks hanging from them.

"It's straight up," Brittmarie says, smiling. "What do you think?"

There is an art to climbing tussock-grass mountains, I'm sure, but an amateur like me can only improvise. Because the grass clumps tightly at the base, I hold on securely there as I pull myself up, stepping in the mud between tussocks. Petrels have made burrows among the tussocks, and I use those as footholds whenever I can. If you have upper-body strength, you can hold on with both hands, as if you were climbing a rope ladder, and find safe footing. Halfway up the hill, we are panting hard, and pause to rest. If anything, the hill looks even steeper above us, the tussocks bulging overhead. Suppose the edge tussocks aren't firmly rooted and break off? We decide to angle up, and finally we reach the top, where a field of tussocks leads across promontories to a distant group of nesting albatrosses with their chicks. Half an hour later, we have stolen up on them in the grass. Fluffy gray chicks swivel to face us, each with a black bridle-shaped stripe across its mouth. One or two begin clacking to warn us away. Their parents fly overhead or at eye level, or soar along the cliffs below us. Perched at that height, in windy mist, while albatrosses maneuver, we see the ship rolling on the freshening sea; the captain, whose skills we learned to respect in the iceberg-clotted channels, is holding steady against wind and current. We see Zodiacs plunging through the water to unload. We see lens-shaped clouds prowling the mountains, and know that they signal high winds. But our goal is still above us. Hand over hand, leaping small pits and bogs, we climb toward an unmistakable sound—a chattery braying. There, hundreds of feet above the sea, sprawls a rookery of macaroni penguins. Plump, slightly farouche-looking, with orange hair parted in the middle, they run around like miniature Zero Mostels. How on earth they manage the climb we don't know, but climb it they often must, with their stomachs full of food for their waiting young. Everybody knows that it would be almost impossible for a creature that can't fly to get up this mountain. Fortunately, the penguins don't know it, and here they are.

"Think of the energy it must take for a little, short-legged bird to walk up over all those sharp, rocky slopes to get to the top to breed," Brittmarie says, pulling a camera from her knapsack. "It's beyond comprehension."

"Tenacity," I say, thinking out loud, and not meaning the macaroni penguin's tenacity, exactly, but life's. It hangs on in such out-of-the-way places, with such ingenuity and bravado.

When the seas start growing dangerously rough, we are summoned back to the ship, and set sail at long last for the king-penguin rookeries, at Gold Harbour and Salisbury Plain, on the

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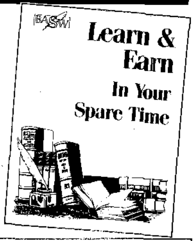

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island of South Georgia. When we arrive there, our Zodiacs take us, through curling waves, to a steep beach. For some reason, there is the sound of harmonicas and, occasionally, oncoming distant trains. Ahead of me, I see a nearby hill squirming in the sunlight and automatically walk toward it. All at once, it reels into focus as a bustling, fidgeting, buzzing, clamorous king-penguin metropolis. It sprawls for miles, pouring along a scimitar-shaped beach and through interfolding valleys and down the hillsides. It is penguin heaven. The adults stand tall, each with a gorgeous pair of orange commas on its cheeks, a radiant sun-yellow blooming at its throat, and an apricot or lavender comet along each side of its bill. Curious yet stately, they let me sit down right among them. One slightly potbellied male king, carrying an egg on his feet, "head flags" with his mate; they bob and sweep heads like signalmen with flags, or shadow boxers. Then the female touches her bill to her brood patch, where she holds the egg, and tosses her head up and rubs her bill back and forth across his neck, as if to sharpen it on the whetstone of his desire. A neighbor bashes them both with his flippers, and they screech out a rude reply.

Kings don't like being crowded. Thousands of birds stand close in the rookery, many with single large eggs on their feet, but one will occasionally put out a flipper to keep its neighbor at a comfortable distance. Any attacking skua would face an impenetrable sea of sharp upturned bills; it would be like flying into a bed of nails. King penguins know exactly how much space they need to feel secure but not hemmed in, and they are rarely more than a flipper smack or a bill lunge away from one another. Four bachelors strut by smartly in a line, looking gallant and available. One pauses in front of a female, points his apricot-striped bill skyward, thrusts out his chest, cranks his flippers back, and flaps rhythmically, as if he were trying to lift off. A hoarse drumbeat throbs from his throat, then changes to a climactic braying of two tones at once—the harmonica I heard. His ecstatic display is all aces, and the female responds. They head flag together for a while. For a long time, they stare at each other and chatter together. Then the male throws his shoulders back and strolls forward, in what scientists call "the advertisement walk." Looking as swell as possible, he turns his head from side to side, so that she can see what beautiful orange ear patches he has. If she follows him, it's a marriage. Now some other bachelors waddle up and try to muscle in, gently chasing her toward the shore. Demure, she holds her flippers to her sides while the bachelors crow and rave. Ultimately, her original swain wins out, and bumps her repeatedly, though gently, with his chest, herding her to the outskirts of the rookery, where they will have a little more room to breed. In time, he will stand right on top of her back, mate in as little as forty seconds, and then climb down, leaving muddy footprints behind.

To pledge their devotion, a nearby couple plunge into a suite of "mutual displays," which look like ecstatic displays except that both male and female take part. Facing each other, they weave their heads from side to side and cry out with joy, finally pointing their bills up to the sky. Doing this every few minutes keeps their bond strong. Most penguins return to the same nest each year, and to the same mate, whose voice they recognize. Birds whose mates have died or with whom they weren't able to nest successfully the previous year must find new mates. If the rookery is disturbed for any reason, couples often engage in mutual displays, and they also do so when an egg is laid, or when they change shifts in incubating an egg—in fact, whenever it seems wise to restate their vows. Insinuating themselves through the rookery, at speed, two penguins do the "slender walk." All they want is to get from their nests to the sea without stopping to fight or give anybody grief, so they hold their flippers tight against their sides, slick down their feathers, and slide through as inoffensively as possible. In a major rookery, everything is happening at once, and you can see just about all phases of the king's life cycle going on simultaneously. A fluffy baby peers out from under a parent's soft white belly. A larger baby turns to hide by sticking its head under the parent's belly, leaving its oversized rump outside. A small gaggle of "mohawks," or molting babies, who have a stripe of down on top of their heads, chase an adult and scream to be fed, racing right over the remains of disembowelled chicks.

A king stands on its heels and dusts the snow behind it with its tail. By now, I have removed my parka to reveal a bright-yellow sweatsuit. Although I'm the wrong shape, and don't have cheek commas, my black hair and screaming-yellow body are the right colors to interest a king penguin. It shuffles up close, cocks a head to one side and then the other, and carefully checks me over. There is ordinarily a no man's land between us and wild animals. They fear us and shy away. But penguins are among the very few animals on earth that cross that divide. They seem to regard us as penguins, too, perhaps of a freakish species. After all, we stand upright, travel in groups, talk all the time, and sort of waddle. Though I am black and yellow and in a submissive posture, I am not the penguin it hankers for, it decides at last, not one of *its* kind, and it shuffles away slowly, keeping an eye on me until it disappears into the gyrating sea of black and white.

A low, smothery cloud bank drifts overhead. It's going to be a rainy night in South Georgia. Now, as the penguin society begins to close ranks around me, I think of brown-white-left, the fluffy chick I helped to raise at Sea World. He will have moved to Orlando by now and will already be fledging. Even if he could understand me, how could I begin to describe his homeland and the rigors of penguin life in the Antarctic—tell him how poor his odds would be of survival? I am probably seeing his parents, and perhaps his brothers and sisters, right here in this rookery. When I think of the horror of a penguin being flayed alive by a leopard seal, my skin crawls. Nature neither gives nor expects mercy. As perhaps the world's only animal that does, I gently touch the sleek, oiled back of a beautiful nesting penguin, with a fine set of commas, whose feathers are tipped with a bluish gleam. For brown-white-left, life will be more artificial, of course, but also much safer, and it's good to know that he is alive a world away. Safe from hunger, leopard seal, and skua, he is probably sitting like a pensioner on a park bench and watching the silent pageant pass by on the moving sidewalk beyond the glass, where ghostly human beings float in a darkness nearly as deep as the Antarctic night.

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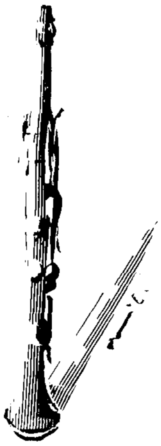
MUSICAL EVENTS

Ring of Gloom

IN the Kennedy Center Opera House last month, the Deutsche Oper Berlin presented two cycles of the "Ring," staged by the company's general director, Götz Friedrich. I saw the second of them, which had a different conductor and a largely different cast from the first, and three related features of general merit. Between the stage and the audience there was no obfuscating scrim—or front gauze—such as has removed immediacy from most "Ring" productions of recent decades. Second, in the Kennedy acoustics the words were excellently audible; one paid attention to the characters and to what they were saying. Third, and most important, Christof Perick was a conductor responsive to the drama and alert to what was happening on the stage. The playing of the Berlin orchestra was less classy and less precise than that of the Met orchestra in its recent "Ring" but did not have the superfatted quality of the New York band's; the instrumental contributions were lean, muscular, incisive. This "Ring" sounded neither driven nor slow and lumbering, and its long periods were admirably shaped.



There was little else to praise, except a few of the singers. Mr. Friedrich had embraced the dismal notion of setting all the "Ring" in a subway—specifically, the Washington Metro. Not the clean, handsome Metro of today, however, but the place as it might look after a century or two of abandonment and neglect. (Two of the "DANGER" signs affixed to the electrical equipment have tattered away to read—ah, significance!—"ANGER.") The permanent set, designed by Peter Sykora, is a receding perspective of twenty arches, those at the front flattened, those in the distance semicircular, as station yields to tunnel. In a program-book interview Mr. Friedrich declares:

> I looked at the London subway stations, I looked at American cities, and I saw that life more and more is going underground. And I thought, that is our nightmare today. The sky is no longer the sky people once believed in as a home for the gods. The sky today is for rockets and satellites. The gods have retired. They went away, and I think it was under the earth. We have no sky—the sky is only a dream. We have no nature. Nature is only a dream from the past or from the future.

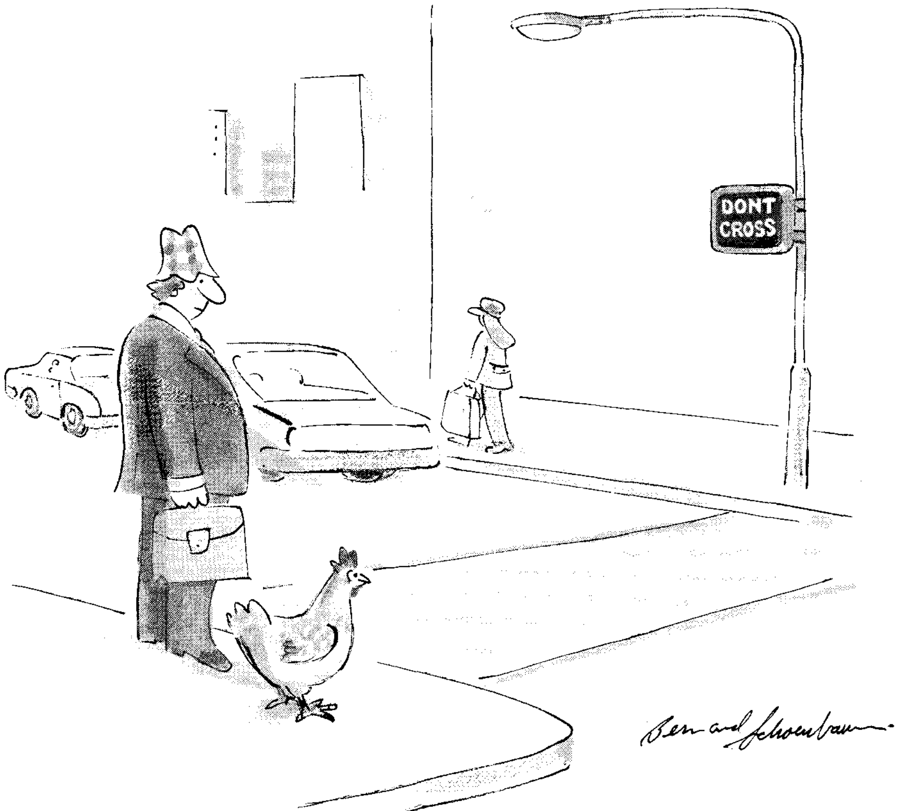
As I write those lines, in a room above a traffic-jammed Broadway, a jewelled dragonfly blunders in through the window, and I break off to guide it back to freedom. No nature? No sky? In Mayor Koch's New York, we have, it is true, each month less sky to look at; tall buildings rise one after another to darken it. But the sky is still there, Frau Sonne still shines, the Hudson glistens in evening radiance, and it is hard to believe that Wotan, or whatever we choose to understand by him, has retired to skulk and scowl down in the subway. The "Ring" that Wagner wrote would make less sense if he had. Perhaps Mr. Friedrich has been in Berlin too long and needs a spell in Santa Fe, where the skies remain large. There was a drabness and a pessimism about this production—peaks, forests, skies, clouds, the mighty river at best small-scale, insubstantial illusions staged in the coffered tunnel—which seemed ill matched to the music. There are dramas to be written about the death of the gods, the destruction of nature, and what produced the foul world we live in. Indeed, Wagner wrote one. But he did not *start* in gloom and sustain it for fifteen depressing hours. He showed what once was, and what remained even when the World Ash Tree had been wounded, and the Gold had been raped from the Rhine, to be forged into an instrument that makes its possessor loveless, wealthy, and powerful. He ended with an inspiring D-flat vision of what the world might become if love, courage, and selflessness could triumph. Fire and water rise to purge the old evils. Moreover, he presented the "Ring" as a progress, an action, a series of significant deeds punctuated by recapitulatory narratives. Mr. Friedrich's "Ring" is a flashback, a "memory enactment." It begins with a long minute of gray silence: shrouded, despondent gods sit in the subway, pondering the past, waiting, without hope, for the low E-flat to sound, for the cycle to be embarked on and gone through all over again, with the same sorry result. At the close of the "Ring," the gods are still sitting there: another try will one day be made, another, equally unsuccessful cycle enacted. Mr. Friedrich is entitled to his pessimism; many profound observers of our world have shared it. But he does ill to use Wagner's "Ring," a work of very different import, for its expression.

IN 1976, Mr. Friedrich, then principal producer at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, completed a "Ring" there that was received at the time with mixed feelings but that in retrospect—after some of the travesties subsequently endured—seems almost a model of fidelity. In a polemical program essay the director asked "Where does the 'Ring' take place?" and answered, "If the place of action must be stated, it is the stage of Covent Garden." Josef Svoboda designed for him a basic platform that at the start could be the wooden wagon of a medieval mystery play but that soon revealed its ability to rise, fall, swivel, swoon, revolve, and—at the touch of a switch—convert its smooth surface into tall steps in high spectacular style. Mr. Friedrich suggested that "a history of mankind in the theatre should, on stage, also mirror the history of the theatre." That Covent Garden "Ring," with its elaborate machinery and extravagant, glittering scenes, held many memorable images. The makers of the Berlin "Ring," it seems, began with a similar idea. Mr. Sykora, in the program book, recalls initial proposals to treat "Das Rheingold" as "archaic theatre, open spaces, mystery play, Piscator-stage"; "Die Walküre" as "bourgeois tragic drama, Strindberg, closed space"; "Siegfried" as "Grand Opera, black theatre"; and "Götterdämmerung" as "science-fiction, Orwell, a movie set." But then a postcard of the Washington Metro, sent to Mr. Friedrich, and a Henry Moore wartime drawing of the London Tube, with rows of sleeping people stretching into the distance, driven underground by Nazi bombs, suggested the different iconography that was adopted. From the Covent Garden "Ring" Mr. Friedrich retained the mincing, fancified pavane by which he represented the gods' triumphal entry into Valhalla; magnifying and distorting lenses in the Gibichung palace (which serve no dramatic purpose that I could discern); and Hagen's presence onstage during Brünnhilde's scenes with Waltraute and with Siegfried-as-Gunther.

In Washington, "Das Rheingold" wended its way and was not unbearable. Through one opera, the rather striking décor could be accepted, even if Mr. Sykora's costumes were deplorable. A low-tech, slightly ramshackle effect was evidently intended. In Covent Garden, the Rhinebed had been a vast, mysterious space glinting with green and gold, reflected in the mirrored underside of the huge platform high above. In Washington, some pieces of filmy fabric, suspended from and agitated by wires, sufficed to suggest the river. It was strange to see the hitherto tough-minded Mr. Friedrich adopting others' modern modes: gods in half-masks; Froh and Donner as caricatures. In the later operas we had Hunding's added posse of henchmen; Fricka's white-fox tippet; Siegmund's death in Wotan's embrace; the Gibichungs in whiteface and their vassals likewise, with logos stencilled on their brows. And, of course, everyone spent a good deal of time on his or her knees. As the cycle progressed, the "time-tunnel" seemed ever more oppressive, ever less adequate as a setting for Wagner's "deeds of music made visible." In Act II of "Die Walküre," it held two tabletop models of ruined cities (Dresden and Coventry?), a toppled perambulator, and, sculpted, the carcass of a giant horse. Apparently as a joke, Brünnhilde, who was dressed in black leather, donned the winged helmet of tradition when preparing for battle. The Valkyries were a garish pop group; they lay, all eight of them, in an entwined, exhausted tangle while the music of their Ride rang out, and rose to shout "Hojotoho!" with lewd bumps and grinds. Brünnhilde's enchanted sleep was guarded by eight little fire pots, such as roadworkers use; no heroism was needed to pick a way past them. In the final section of the "Siegfried" love duet, she and Siegfried impatiently kicked helmet and byrnie, sword and horn aside, off the center-stage platform bed, and fell to copulation as soon as the last note had been sung. The "Rheingold" dragon was some kind of mechanical press, and the "Siegfried" dragon a monster bulldozer, driven by Fafner. (Both were quite effective.) The ring itself was a broad jewelled knuckle-duster, spanning all four fingers. In Act III of "Götterdämmerung," the Rhinemaidens dragged themselves wearily, painfully, through mantled pools of polluted slime (even while Mr. Perick sounded the lilt and freshness of the music Wagner composed for them). The dead Siegfried lay onstage, abandoned, during the Funeral March, while the scene shifted back around him to the Gibichung hall. In photographs the sets look colorful. In the theatre they faded into one dominant gray—except in the first scene of "Siegfried." Mime had tricked out part of the tunnel with bright paper cutouts of flowers, sun and moon, a rainbow, with a tepee, toys, and fairy lights, to make a jolly nursery for young Siegfried. The "Ring," Michael Tanner writes in a wise chapter of "The Wagner Companion," "leaves us braced, refreshed, invigorated by suggesting the vital flow that comes from unconscious Nature." Robert Donington has written eloquently of natural correspondences between the psyche and the representations of the physical world. In the drab Friedrich "Ring" we seized gladly on one, gaudy manifestation of nature, even while understanding that it was but a sham, the contrivance of a scheming, evil-minded little dwarf.

Critics are sometimes chided for scornfully describing the details of modern productions instead of searching out the meanings of a director's innovations. Mr. Friedrich's meanings were generally not recondite, though sometimes it was hard to guess what he was up to. (Did he mean to guy the murder of the hero—the tenor obligingly lifted an arm away from his body, and the bass tucked his spear into the gap—or did the actors just muff the moment?) From the man who at Bayreuth staged "Tannhäuser" and "Parsifal" in sharp focus, this was disappointing. It is all very well to say, as Mr. Friedrich says in that interview, "The wonderful thing is that even the most crazy production cannot really hurt or destroy the work. It still exists on paper, and we can always come back to the paper." Time, talent, and money are not limitless. In the long run, the "Ring" will survive. In the shorter span of human life, we must mourn when yet another presentation of the cycle does it little justice.

AMERICAN singers remain prominent on the German stage. The Berlin casts contained fourteen Americans, among them both Wotans, both Loges, Sieglinde, one Brünnhilde, and one Gutrune. In Berlin itself, the role of Wotan has been done by Simon Estes,



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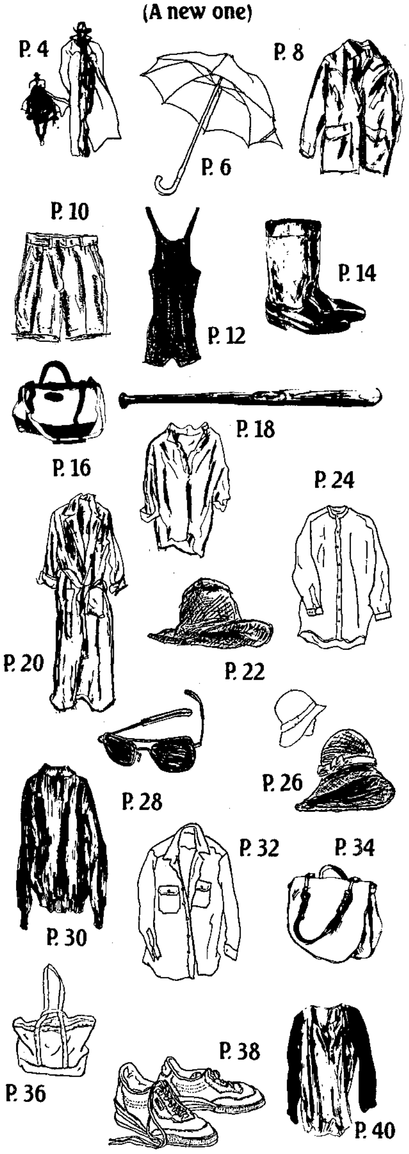

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Roger Roloff, James Morris, and Robert Hale. The first act of "Die Walküre" was very badly sung, by Karan Armstrong and Peter Hofmann, the Sieglinde and the Siegmund. A last-minute Brünnhilde, Janis Martin (who used to sing Fricka at Bayreuth, twenty years ago), appeared in Act II, and displayed a voice secure and reliable through its range—a controlled instrument used with understanding. She was not radiant, but she was moving in soft entreaty, and she was never inadequate. That temperate praise raises her above many Brünnhildes we hear today; I see that San Francisco has engaged her for one of its "Ring" cycles next year. The Loge was George Shirley—a sparky houseboy of a fire god at Covent Garden a dozen years ago but now too worn of voice to make much of the role. The Wotan of "Das Rheingold" and "Die Walküre," Mr. Estes, acted when he was not singing; for each vocal entry he planted himself in a stand-and-deliver position—eyes on the conductor or the prompter, voice directed straight out into the house—and vocalized. (The prompter of the "Rheingold" and "Walküre" performances was exceptionally audible.) Mr. Friedrich embarked on this "Ring," in 1984, with Mr. Estes as his Wotan, but his ability to fashion dull singers into expressive artists seems, for once, to have failed him.

From "Siegfried" Mr. Estes retired; Wotan-as-Wanderer was sung by Mr. Hale, the Wotan of the first cycle. He won golden reviews for that performance, and in the "Siegfried" of the second cycle it became plain that he deserved them. He rang out. He was trenchant. He surmounted the diminishment Mr. Friedrich had prescribed—a raffish pirate mustache, no beard, a lab assistant's long, dirty coat—and seemed a true god, majestic, troubled, and noble. He, too, is billed for a San Francisco "Ring" next year, and in that more elevated context should shine. Anne Evans, announced as the Brünnhilde of the second cycle, entered it for "Siegfried." Coached in the role by Reginald Goodall—whose recurrent injunction is "Don't *scream*, dear"—she didn't scream. I can believe that in the Welsh National "Ring," built on and around her Brünnhilde and sung, to an English-speaking audience, in English, she was moving. I hope that in Bayreuth this summer she will be impressive. But in the hurly-burly of a German house performance she sounded like a Mimì miscast: often drowned by the orchestra, often inaudible. When one could "listen through," one heard a delicacy, a precision, a response to the sense of each move, each syllable, which were uncommonly beautiful. Miss Evans' professed model is Frida Leider, the most sensitively Wagnerian of heroic sopranos on record, and in some ways—but not in vocal scale—this was a Leider-like performance. The Met should send its high-powered Wagnerians—Hildegard Behrens, James Morris, James Levine, Gary Lakes—to work for a while with Sir Reginald in the little attic room at Covent Garden, nicknamed Valhalla, where he instills matchless Wagnerian musicality.

The Siegfried was René Kollo, probably the best around. His high notes were not pleasing, his voice does not have the easy amplitude a Siegfried needs, but he sang the words intelligently, and brought a touch of poetic romance to the boy's speculations about his origins. Mr. Sykora's costumes hampered him: a tight Oshkosh romper suit to start with, a pleated black tunic as his wedding dress. The bass roles—Fafner, Fasolt, Hunding, Hagen—were taken by those reliable, large-voiced northerners Bengt Rundgren and Matti Salminen (with Aage Haugland the Fasolt and the Hunding of the first cycle), as in many "Ring"s today. The Alberich was Günter von Kannen, the Mime Horst Hiestermann. Both were telling; the latter's acting was excessively acrobatic. The Erda, Jadwiga Rappé, sounded good at first but then began to press. So did the Fricka and Waltraute, Ute Walther. ("Don't *scream*, dears.")

THIS Berlin production—which is now to be taken up by Covent Garden—left me in a state of profound depression. I'd gone to Washington with high hopes. Mr. Friedrich has a mind. Over the years, his work has irritated, challenged, stirred, and never before bored me. The décor, as I said, looked promising in photographs. And then! Memory and common sense tell me that I must summon the energy to put the Furtwängler or the Goodall performance of the "Ring" onto the phonograph, to rediscover Wagner's drama.

—ANDREW PORTER

ANNALS OF INTELLIGENCE

CHANGING TARGETS

THREE years ago, in the summer of 1986, terrorism was a pervasive worry—at least as intimidating and widely discussed as, say, drug-related crime is right now. Europe seemed to be awash in terrorists, and American tourists, with a few exceptions, were shunning the Continent, even though the exchange rate still argued for going. Well-organized groups of murderous middle-class kids, many of them trained and otherwise abetted by counterpart groups in the Middle East, had created a freemasonry of terrorism. European business leaders were being hunted down like game. Even softer targets for the assassin's bullet or car bomb were American diplomats whenever they were separated from their embassies, and by then the embassies had acquired a fortresslike aspect. Air travellers—especially those en route to the Middle East—had to ponder the palpable risk of being hijacked. In Washington, Administration warnings deliberately exaggerated the problem; the idea was to deny European governments their normal quota of American tourists, thereby pushing those governments to commit more resources to counterterrorism, and to oblige their various intelligence and police agencies to work with, instead of against, one another in order to begin coping with terrorist units, which, unlike their pursuers, *were* coöperating. The terrorists truly had a pan-European focus. Swiftly crisscrossing one another's frontiers, they could and did take their sanctuaries and logistical support for granted. They had assumed, mistakenly, that coöperation between their various groups was essential, because governments would be coöperating to neutralize them. On the contrary, not only was coöperation between governments virtually nonexistent but the responsibility for counterterrorism within most European countries was held by numerous agencies, which communicated with one another badly, if at all. The problem was most acute in Italy, France, and West Germany—the countries where the terrorists were most active (leaving aside Britain's very different, and persistent, problem with the Irish Republican Army). In the spring of 1985, I was told in Bonn that jurisdiction in most terrorism cases usually fell to one of the *Länder*, or states, instead of the Bundes Kriminalamt, or B.K.A., which is the German equivalent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The B.K.A. wasn't even granted a role in preventing terrorism, although prevention is normally the most effective means of coping with the problem. Rome and Paris presented similar absurdities.

Faced with full-throated domestic outcries and with mounting pressure from Washington, Europe's counterterrorist agencies eventually took action, and did put coöperative measures ahead of jurisdictional quarrels. The action yielded results: the major terrorist groups in Europe, and also a Lebanese-based one that operated mainly in Europe, were largely rolled up or neutralized. The soft targets that had tempted the groups became steadily fewer as security measures became more rigorous. Police units acquired confidence, and their superiors became guardedly optimistic.

Some officials of counterterrorist agencies remain optimistic, and think that terrorism has peaked. But others, especially in Washington and London, worry that, even if the threat from Europe's mindlessly alienated young people has receded, resolute and resourceful groups in the Middle East are more dangerous than ever. In adapting themselves to the tougher and more effective countermeasures of the governments, these terrorists may have

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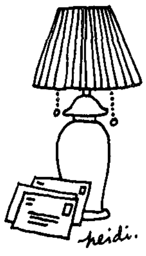
decided to concentrate on different targets. They may have concluded, for example, that hijacking an airliner is more difficult than destroying one in flight with a preset bomb. They regard a successful hijacking as a political statement; they can kill two or three passengers and, with luck, walk away from the affair unharmed and unpunished. As a condition for liberating the aircraft and its hostages, they may even obtain the release of one or more of their comrades who are serving well-earned prison terms. Blowing up an airliner instead has minuses as well as plusses. Although the act spreads confusion and fear, it makes no clear political point. Also, while the operation is somewhat less difficult than a hijacking, the long-run risks are larger, because of the wanton destruction. Governments are certain to commit themselves to a coördinated and relentless pursuit of the performers of the deed and, possibly, its sponsors. Nonetheless, there are signs that terrorists—or, at least, those who pose a special threat to American lives and property—are modifying their agenda: building it around acts of greater violence. “As soft targets become harder, terrorists are moving toward other targets,” says Bob A. Ricks, the F.B.I.'s deputy assistant director for counterterrorism. “Their methods are changing.”



Four years ago, the F.B.I. took a sombre view of the threat to American civilian and military personnel serving in Europe and the Middle East but judged the United States itself all but invulnerable to Middle East terrorists. Groups of that ilk or any other require local support, and what then passed for terrorist support structures here were thoroughly penetrated and seemed useless. The F.B.I. office that was responsible for counterterrorism was then more concerned about heavily armed domestic neo-Nazi groups. At present, however, the locus for terrorism exported from the Middle East is expected to include this country. “The infrastructure of the Middle Eastern groups is now capable of carrying out terrorist incidents,” says Oliver (Buck) Revell, the senior F.B.I. official in charge of all investigative activity. “We can't force these people out if they have temporary visas and haven't committed a crime.” Like his counterparts in London who are preoccupied with protecting the novelist Salman Rushdie from Ayatollah Khomeini's sentence of death, Revell worries as much about free-lance fanatics (“wackos,” in the trade jargon) as about the groups themselves. “There is an element within the United States that could be motivated by Khomeini's rhetoric to acts of violence,” he says. “There are promises of rewards and martyrdom. How do you monitor individuals who have the motivation and are not connected to some organized structure?”

The first moves within the United States for which inspiration came from places like Libya and Iran occurred over the past year. On April 12, 1988, Yu Kikumura, a member of a terrorist group called the Japanese Red Army, or J.R.A., was providentially spotted for what he was by a state trooper at a rest area on the New Jersey Turnpike. Kikumura was planning to set off bombs in New York City on April 14th, the second anniversary of America's bombing of Libya, so it was clear that his action was connected with terrorist acts arranged by Libya's erratic despot, Colonel Muammar Qaddafi. Kikumura had obtained the ingredients for at least three bombs, and pinholes in a map he was carrying indicated that his targets were a Navy recruiting office, the United Nations, and the garment district. He was accused by the government of working secretly with Libyan agents and of plotting “mass slaughter.” (Kikumura had mixed shot with the explosive, thereby creating what the military call an anti-personnel weapon—one intended to kill or injure as many people as possible.) He was convicted in November and will probably spend most of the rest of his life in prison.

On March 10th of this year, about eleven months after Kikumura's arrest, a woman in San Diego named Sharon Rogers who was driving to work in a van barely managed to escape from it after a bomb went off inside it. Mrs. Rogers is the wife of the commander of the U.S.S. Vincennes, which shot down an Iranian Airbus in the Persian Gulf last July, having mistaken it for a hostile military aircraft. Revenge was the presumed motive for the assault on Mrs. Rogers. Revenge could also have been the motive—or, more likely, among the motives—for the destruction of Pan American World Airways Flight 103 last December 21st. The Boeing 747 jumbo aircraft, which was cruising at thirty-one thousand feet with two hundred and fifty-nine people aboard, fell in pieces into a Scottish village called Lockerbie, eleven of whose inhabitants were also killed.

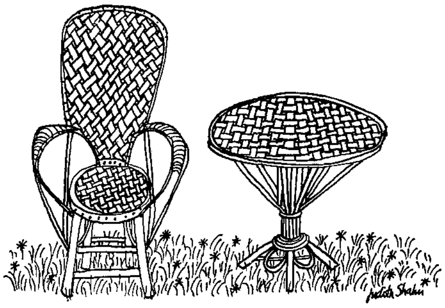
Kikumura showed America to be far more pregnable than had been assumed. Neither American nor Japanese agencies were remotely aware that he, or anyone like him, was operating within the United States, and each side was appalled by the discovery. He was travelling on a forged passport that showed no sign of his having left Japan. Skeptics in Tokyo and Washington were not persuaded that Kikumura was really a J.R.A. soldier until twelve or so hours after his apprehension—an event that owed nothing to the process of counterterrorism and everything to a combination of Kikumura's incompetence and the alertness of one state trooper. Kikumura had stopped at a rest area where a brisk and well-known traffic in drugs and weapons was carried on. On checking Kikumura's car, the trooper saw a scruffy-looking character and, on the back seat, an open flight bag containing cartons marked "GUNPOWDER." Something still odder lay on the floor. After obtaining Kikumura's permission to examine it, the trooper found a box containing three fire extinguishers from which the hoses had been removed. Converting fire extinguishers into bombs is a standard method of operation of Japanese terrorists.

Besides inviting attention to himself and his trade, Kikumura had simplified matters for the prosecution by keeping records of even his smallest purchases—screwdrivers, wires, and the like. More significant was the government's contention that the Kikumura operation bore Qaddafi's sponsorship. There are known connections between Libya and the J.R.A.: the latter has involved itself with Libyan assets in Lebanon. From late 1986 to early 1987, Kikumura and some of his comrades had been observed training in Lebanon's Beqaa Valley, where the region's liveliest terrorist groups maintain camps and do from time to time mingle with one another.

Hijackings aside, there is rarely a smoking gun in terrorist incidents. Various groups often claim responsibility, but their claims are greeted with skepticism more often than not and always with caution. Whatever hard information turns up usually isn't hard enough to stand up in court. Apprehending terrorists is difficult, but convicting them can be tougher still. And convictions are essential. They show that democratic societies can fight terrorism within the law.

As is true of most man-made disasters, not nearly enough is known about what actually happened to Pan Am 103 and why it happened. What is known is sketchy and inconclusive. The flight originated in Frankfurt, and stopped in London, where passengers transferred from a Boeing 727 to a connecting 747 bound for New York. After the 747 was delayed on the runway for nearly half an hour, stiff winds dictated a change in course, and that kept the aircraft over land for ten to twenty minutes longer than had been scheduled. The course correction was bad luck for the terrorists, who, experts believe, had timed the bomb to explode when Pan Am 103 was over the Irish Sea. Terrorists prefer to have a targeted airplane explode over water, to minimize chances for the recovery of evidence and to deny authorities more than a presumption of foul play. An Air-India 747 that fell into the sea off the Irish coast with three hundred and twenty-nine passengers and crew in June of 1985 is thought to have been victimized by a suitcase bomb placed aboard it in Vancouver by Sikh extremists. A Korean Air Lines plane and a hundred and fifteen people disappeared without a trace over the Andaman Sea near Burma in November of 1987. Investigators determined that two North Korean agents had planted a bomb.

An airliner that falls into the sea is like the proverbial tree that no one hears when it falls in the forest. Many of the bodies of the Pan Am 103 passengers weren't recovered, but more than ten thousand personal items were found, and although the wreckage was strewn over eight hundred and forty-five square miles, more than eighty per cent of the aircraft has been reassembled. The forensic puzzle was difficult but manageable. Primary jurisdiction for the case rests with the Scottish police, and they are being assisted by Scotland Yard, in London, and by the F.B.I. "The idea was to narrow the universe," the F.B.I.'s Ricks says. Finding the explosive device was essential, and after it was found forensic experts were able to reconstruct the luggage bin in which the explosion occurred, even though it had been reduced to tiny fragments. The bomb itself was made of a remarkably explosive substance called Semtex, which is easy to acquire and hard to detect in luggage inspections. It is made in Czechoslovakia. The bomb was concealed in a Toshiba radio cassette player, which on being reconstituted was shown to have contained a barometric-pressure device that could detonate the bomb at a predetermined altitude. Moreover, advanced microcircuitry gave it the option of becoming a so-called two-stop bomb, and so the investigators had the task of determining where it was put aboard the flight—Frankfurt or London. The British and the Americans have made a convincing case that the lethal radio cassette player began the journey in Frankfurt. The Germans still dispute the point.



For a while, it was unclear how a bomb—even one made of Semtex—that was small enough to fit into a radio cassette player could have destroyed a behemoth like the 747. Either the flight was very unlucky or the terrorists were very artful, because the telltale luggage bin was situated in a highly vulnerable place, just in front of the wing, and the explosion tore the forward part of the fuselage, including the bubble that houses the flight deck, from the rest of the aircraft. Two other flights had survived Semtex bombs. In the first—a Pan Am 747 en route from Tokyo to Honolulu in August of 1982—the bomb, which had been placed under a seat, exploded shortly before the airplane landed. One person—a Japanese student who was in the seat—was killed, and fifteen were injured. But the explosion did not breach the skin of the fuselage, because its effects were diffused through the interior of the huge airplane, which landed safely. In April of 1986, a similar bomb killed four passengers on Trans World Air-

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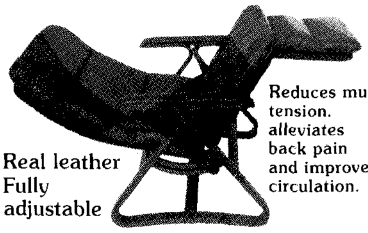

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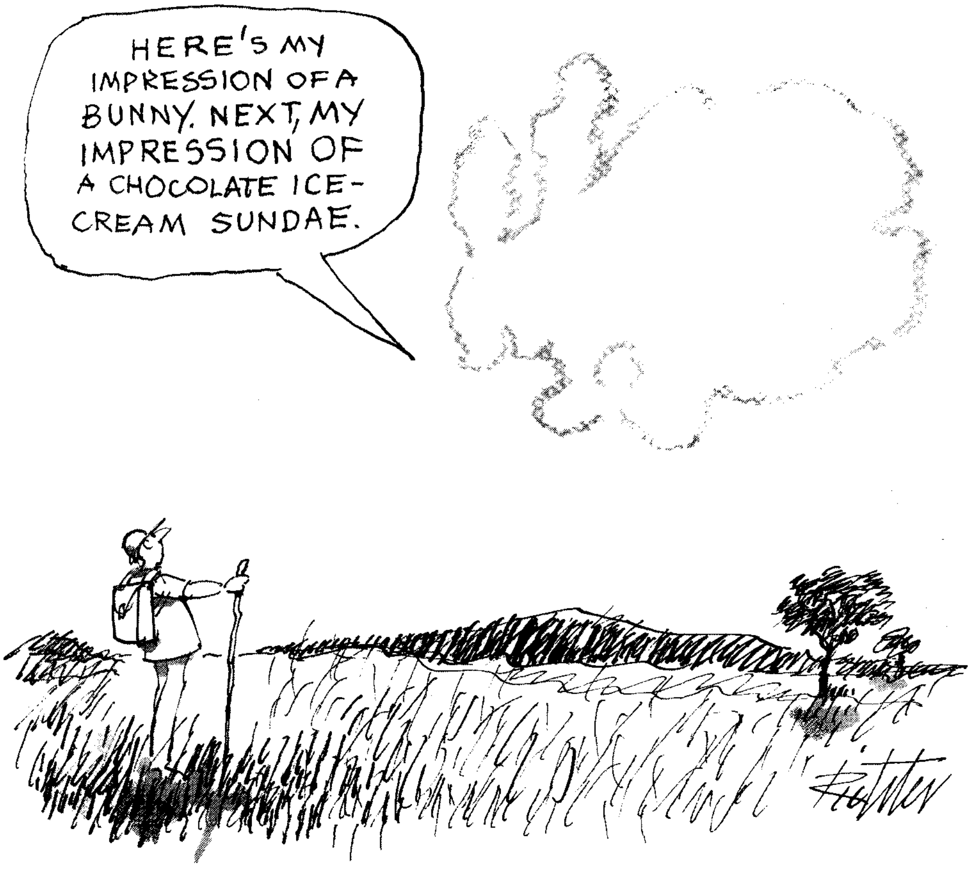
lines Flight 840, a Boeing 727, as it was approaching Athens from Rome. The explosion on Pan Am 103, because it was contained by the luggage bin, did breach the skin. Still, the hole it made at even so critical a place might not have crippled the airplane if it had not been for the explosive decompression that was bound to occur at thirty-one thousand feet, which vastly enlarged the damage. The authorities seriously doubt whether the terrorists could have somehow pre-positioned the bag holding the Toshiba radio.

Out of the farrago of terrorist groups that might have been responsible, the authorities have their suspect, or think they do. He is Ahmed Jibril, a Palestine-born former Syrian Army captain, who since 1968 has led a band that calls itself the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command, and is known as the P.F.L.P.–G.C. Jibril is one of terrorism's high fliers. His group works with sophisticated bombs. It has hijacked two airliners, one of which it blew up, and it machine-gunned a third as it was about to take off from Zurich for Tel Aviv. In February of 1986, Jibril held a press conference in Libya and said, inter alia, "There will be no safety for any traveller on an Israeli or U.S. airliner."

The case against Jibril, though persuasive, is circumstantial, and if it weren't for some unusually good intelligence, credit for which remains unclear, he and his group would not stand accused of the crime. Late last October, West German authorities arrested fourteen people in Frankfurt. All were members of the P.F.L.P.–G.C. Also discovered in a safe house was a large cache of weapons, which included a rocket launcher, submachine guns, sticks of TNT, hand grenades, and small arms. In another of the group's apartments—this one in Neuss, near Düsseldorf—the B.K.A. found a quantity of Semtex, some barometric-pressure devices, and state-of-the-art detonators. And in a car outside the apartment there was at least one Toshiba radio cassette player, which closely resembled the model used against Pan Am 103, and a partly completed eleven-ounce Semtex bomb that fitted within it. Those arrested included Jibril's first deputy, Hafez Kassem Dalkamoni. This group, authorities say, had the experience to blow up a 747 in flight. And the evidence that turned up along the Pan Am 103 forensic trail was a good match for what was found with Dalkamoni's people—who, of course, had been in the right place, too. Since the Dalkamoni lot was rolled up two months before Pan Am 103 was destroyed, a sibling group, equally well trained and well equipped, may have done the actual job. Or, more likely, some of the people arrested could have done it, since the Germans released most of them for lack of evidence and, inexplicably, chose not even to keep track of them. Furthermore, the means by which the contrivance reached the luggage bin may have been established. In mid-April, the F.B.I. leaked a story to CBS News that said a young Lebanese-American named Khalid Jaafar unwittingly carried the compromised bag. According to the report, a man who was related to Dalkamoni planted the bomb in Jaafar's suitcase. The F.B.I. leak may have been premature, for the evidence does not yet show conclusively that the bomb was in Jaafar's suitcase. All that is clear so far is that a hard-sided brown Samsonite bag containing the bomb was placed in cargo bay 14L, on the left side of the plane. Since none of the luggage from London had been put in that bay, the bag's Frankfurt provenance seems clear, at least to American and British investigators. And the Americans are reported to be sure about Jaafar—who is an American citizen, a Shiite Moslem, and, they think, a courier who carried heroin on numerous trips between the Beqaa Valley in Lebanon and Dearborn, Michigan, where his parents live. The suspicion is that Jaafar thought the Toshiba radio cassette player contained drugs, not a bomb.

THOSE who investigate terrorist acts are absorbed by the task of identifying and, if possible, finding the people who carry them out. They are less concerned with why the act may have been committed, although the answer to that question is more revealing and important than the identity of the hired hands. And hired hands are what most of the terrorist operators are. No one thinks that Jibril himself inspired the assault on Pan Am 103. "He was a gun for hire," Buck Revell says. "He'll rent himself to any sponsor who shares his philosophy and has compatible goals."


HERE'S MY IMPRESSION OF A BUNNY. NEXT, MY IMPRESSION OF A CHOCOLATE ICE-CREAM SUNDAE.
Richter

• •

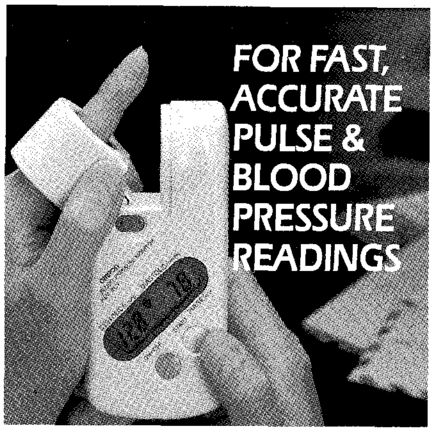
Any of three motives, or any combination of the three, could explain what happened to Pan Am 103, according to experienced diplomats and officials, including Revell. First, the deed could have been inspired by extremists who wished to disrupt Washington's budding dialogue with their hated enemy Yasir Arafat and his Palestine Liberation Organization. Or, second, Qaddafi may have been behind the affair; he has been lying low since he was bombed by the Americans, in April of 1986, but is presumed to want revenge. He has become Jibril's chief source of financial support. The third, and most likely, possibility is that elements in Iran provided the inspiration. A widening consensus of experts inside and out of government holds that Jibril was picked for the job by Iranian Revolutionary Guards who were working through the Hezbollah, or Party of God. The Hezbollah, which is also known as the Islamic Jihad, is an organization of largely Lebanese Shiite militants who are fanatically devoted to the late Ayatollah Khomeini's radical creed and function as an instrument of his will in meting out punishment by violent means to his enemies, whether political or doctrinal. Hezbollah members have kidnapped all or most of the Americans who have been held hostage in Lebanon. Jibril operates from both Syria and Lebanon, where he is in close contact with the Hezbollah. His people, like the Hezbollah's, train in the Beqaa Valley. The Revolutionary Guards are there, too, exercising supervision and providing political indoctrination.

The Iranian mullahs are a vengeful lot, and most of the current leadership promised revenge for the loss of the Airbus in the Persian Gulf last summer. Just after Pan Am 103 was destroyed, the Revolutionary Guards did claim responsibility, in effect citing an eye for an eye. Still, revenge wasn't the only motive, or even the main motive. That probably had more to do with Iran's internal politics than with its proneness to external misconduct. The distinction is important. A simple act of revenge might not be repeated. But the same act, if it was designed to promote the fortunes of one among contesting factions in a power struggle, would have to be regarded as part of a pattern of extreme behavior—as probably foreshadowing more such behavior. To put it differently, governments are assuming that the explanation for what befell Pan Am 103 is more complicated than an eye for an eye, and so more worrisome.

For a year or more, two groups within Iran have been struggling for the upper hand. One is referred to by Western experts as the pragmatists. It has been identified with Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the Speaker of the Majlis, Iran's parliament, who masterminded his government's role in the Iran-Contra affair. The other group, known in Western capitals as the radicals, or hard-liners, is dominated by Ali Akbar Mohtashami, the Minister of the Interior and the creator of the Hezbollah; before Ayatollah Khomeini's death, he had seemed to be running the country, along with Ahmed Khomeini, the Ayatollah's son. The two groups have the same aims and purposes: promoting the will of God and the preëminence of those who, like them, are certain of what He has in mind. They disagree only on how best to uphold the supreme ethic and to cope with infidels beyond their borders who see things differently. The Rafsanjani group favors bending a bit when bending might yield results. It is often in disagreement with Mohtashami on tactics.

"We have seen examples of the Iranian regime redirecting internal dissent and frustration to external targets," Revell says. "The Vincennes was convenient. And where there is no such pretext they may create one. Which brings us to Rushdie."

The Rushdie affair probably began in the summer of 1988, when a ceasefire in Iran's war with Iraq was arranged, largely on Iraq's terms. The ceasefire was a blow to the hard-liners, who had opposed it. They were put on the defensive, and appear to have begun seeking pretexts for violence. Along came "The Satanic Verses," a silly book and a provocation but hardly a hanging offense for most Muslims. In mid-February, after noting a demonstration against the book in Islamabad, Mohtashami is thought to have confronted the Ayatollah with "The Satanic Verses" and obtained his sentence of death for Rushdie. Politically, the tactic was very successful. Now it was the pragmatists who were thrown on the defensive; they began to lose ground rapidly. Over a weekend in late March, they lost two key people—both senior Foreign Ministry officials—who were known to favor better relations with Western Europe. There fol-



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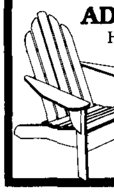
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lowed instantly a more important casualty of the purge—Ayatollah Hussein Ali Montazeri, who had been the designated heir to Ayatollah Khomeini as Iran's first religious and political leader. Montazeri's removal appeared to signal a new, and even harder, line toward the West. On March 29th, the day after Montazeri was sacked, Imam Abdullah Ahdal, the leader of Muslims in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, and an aide were assassinated in Brussels. The Imam had publicly distanced himself from the edict on Rushdie. His death simply reinforces the fear within moderate Muslim circles that the lives of all who stand against the regime in Tehran are at risk.

Rafsanjani seemed to have been isolated, as people loyal to him lost jobs and preferment. Early in May, he, too, adopted the fashionable hard line by proposing that for every Palestinian killed by Israel five Americans, British, and French should be murdered. Then, a few days later, he disavowed the idea, claiming to have been misunderstood. Now, with Khomeini dead, Rafsanjani's stock seems to have returned to about where it had been. For the moment, however, no one knows who, if anyone, will emerge as the dominant political force in Iran, or which of the factions will gain the upper hand.

In London, Whitehall is deeply worried about the threats to British lives and property, including aircraft. The worry is pointed up by an anecdote: just after Khomeini pronounced his death sentence against Rushdie, a visa applicant who called the British Embassy in Tehran said that his purpose in travelling to London was to carry out Khomeini's sentence. "We now confront the wackos of the Islamic diaspora who may think that by blowing up an aircraft or a bus they are fulfilling the Imam's wishes," says a diplomat who specializes in Iranian affairs.

It wasn't a wacko, however, who blew up Pan Am 103. Two and possibly three groups have the requisite mode of operation, one of them being Jibril's group. The deed required meticulous preparation. "The planning almost surely had to start no later than last summer," an American specialist says. That was the time of the ceasefire with Iraq. "The risks are high and go higher as preparation time is shortened. Just arranging the infiltration and exfiltration of agents would take several months."

Jibril, who isn't known for religious zeal, made a public vow in early March to carry out the death sentence against Rushdie, and that vow confirms his link to the Iranians, who must have seen him from the start as the ideal hired gun of the Pan Am operation. Any forensic trail that appeared (assuming that the plane blew up over land instead of water) need not have implicated Jibril, and the Iranians must have reckoned that even if it did implicate him he would be seen as belonging to Syria's President Hafez al-Assad, since he was once a Syrian Army officer and continues to have a base in Syria.

Syria routinely denies involvement in terrorist acts, but in the case of Pan Am 103 the denial was put out with untypical brio. The wily Assad has moderated Syrian policy over the past year or so, and has had good reasons for doing so. First, Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev seems more interested in promoting stability than in playing power politics in the Middle East, where his only high card is Syria. And Gorbachev is exacting a stiffer price from leaders who rely on Soviet military support, as Assad does. Assad is also more dependent now on the West and Japan for economic help. Briefly, few experts think that he had a hand in the Pan Am 103 affair. Nor is he believed to control Jibril, who, like most terrorist leaders, isn't controlled by any government. They are for rent, not for sale.

Whether Assad had prior knowledge of the operation is less clear. Some experts doubt it, having already concluded that his control of Syrian intelligence had become shaky (possibly as his health declined). Others—a small group—suspect that Assad had "passive knowledge," about which he would or could do nothing. Perhaps uppermost in Assad's thinking was an earlier experience with a scheme to bomb an airliner. In April of 1986, a young Jordanian named Nezar Hindawi confessed in London to having made a human time bomb of his Irish girlfriend, Ann Murphy (who was then pregnant with their child). On April 16th, he gave Miss Murphy a trolley bag containing a calculator wired to a bomb; unaware of the bag's contents, she was to take it aboard an El Al 747 to Israel the next day, where, Hindawi said, he would later join her and they would be married. He activated the detonator in a taxi en route to Heathrow Airport. Inside the terminal, Miss Murphy's trolley bag passed through two X-ray machines before reaching the El Al security desk, but there the airline's inspectors, who seemed to be on the lookout for her, took the bag into an adjoining room for further examination. That disclosed the bomb and the converted calculator. The following day, Hindawi, whose escape route had been quickly closed off, surrendered to police.

Hindawi was a free-lance terrorist who until then had tried unavailingly to persuade some intelligence service that shared his hostility toward Israel and Jordan's King Hussein to take him seriously. In January of 1986, the Syrians gave him a chance. Dr. Loutouf Allah Haydar, their Ambassador in London, sent Hindawi to Damascus for instructions. Back in London in early April, he was given the suitcase packed with Semtex plastic explosive, the calculator, and a detonator.

One is left wondering whether the three hundred and eighty-eight passengers and crew aboard El Al's Flight 016 (more than two hundred of them were Americans) owe their lives to unusually rigorous procedures observed by El Al's baggage inspectors or to good counter-intelligence by the British or the Israelis, or to both. Within the United States government, well-informed experts are divided on this question. "The Israelis were expecting Miss Murphy," one of them says. "It was no surprise when she and her bag arrived. It was certain to be gone over again and again." A colleague says that the Syrian Embassy (which was running the operation) was well wired. Whether it was only the British or the British and the Israelis eavesdropping independently on the Syrians, he isn't sure. El Al's baggage-inspection procedures are exemplary, and probably discourage terrorism. In the Hindawi affair, however, one is strongly tempted to credit counter-intelligence with the outcome, and assume that officials who say otherwise are concerned mainly with protecting the methods of their craft.

The predictable reaction to the affair gave Assad still another reason to distance Syria from such goings on. A "monstrous and inhumane crime," Britain's Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, said, and he spoke for other governments of the European Community: all of them except Greece adopted sanctions against Syria.

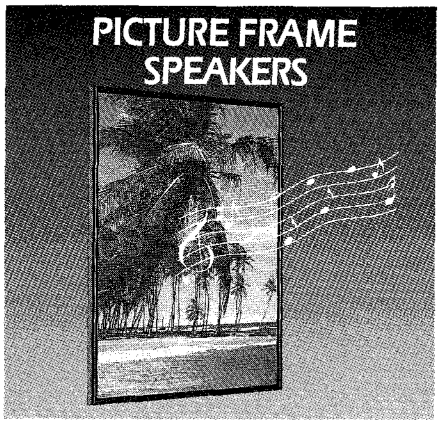
Jibril, who was in Tehran at least once last fall, is thought by some to have been sponsored jointly by Iran and Libya. "Qaddafi's back in the ring," says a senior American diplomat, who has described him as "mercurial, illogical, and unpredictable." Qaddafi is all of that, but it is not likely that he had a direct role in the Pan Am 103 affair; the regimes in Tripoli and Tehran distrust each other and do not work together, even though they have considerable contact with each other.

In August of 1978, shortly before Iran's revolution, Qaddafi queered any chance of productive relations with Khomeini by murdering a Lebanese sheikh named Musa Sadr, who was also an Imam and had made a political force of his country's Shiite community. Musa Sadr was due in Rome on a flight from Tripoli, where he had been consulting with Qaddafi. He never arrived. No one within the Shiite brotherhood, including Khomeini, doubted that he had been abducted and killed by Qaddafi. Western intelligence people agree, even though Qaddafi had no obvious motive for killing Musa Sadr. "It may have been a fit of pique," one of them says. "It's as good an explanation as any." Musa Sadr had studied at holy places in Iraq, where he met Ayatollah Khomeini, then in exile, who grew to look upon him as a son and wasn't likely to forgive his murderer. It was Musa Sadr, and he alone, who held the Lebanese Shias together; within four years of his death, the fundamentalist wing of the community had split away, with much of it pledging allegiance to Iran and becoming the nucleus of the Hezbollah.

Today's Lebanon both fosters and accommodates terrorism. The place swarms with laboratories in which free-lance bombmakers, many of them fine artisans, are available to anyone who can pay for a clever bomb. Other laboratories produce heroin and cocaine, which help to finance the operations of terrorists, who, in turn, offer protection to drug dealers and their people. Abu Nidal, the leader of the best-known, most widely feared, and most successful terrorist organizations, operates four groups in the Beqaa Valley, and his press secretary, Walid Khaled, holds regular news conferences in West Beirut. Lebanon's numerous factions, which divide along and also within religious boundaries, make alliances with the enemies of their enemies. But the alliances and the enmities are in most cases fleeting. Not much endures apart from the sheer bloody-mindedness of the fanatics and the violence-prone on every side. The Shias may hate Qaddafi because of Musa Sadr, but Qaddafi can recruit terrorists from their ranks nonetheless.

Not much is known about relationships between terrorist groups and host countries except that the countries in question—Libya, Syria, and Iran—do not exercise full control over the groups. The Hezbollah, for example, will play one faction in Tehran off against another. And relations between Abu Nidal and Qaddafi are very poor, even though Abu Nidal now operates mainly from Libya, having been shut down in Syria after the Hindawi affair, when Assad came under strong American and European pressure to expel him. In Libya, Abu Nidal's group relies on its own resources for operational security. It is largely self-sustaining, drawing much of its income from a cluster of businesses that it operates.

Terrorist groups have excellent security and are difficult to penetrate. Their communications are rarely intercepted, because—unlike, say, Yasir Arafat's Fatah (the moderate mainstream of the P.L.O.)— the extremists do not use telephones or photocopiers or fax machines. When members of such groups are captured, they do not refuse to answer questions. Instead, they tell contradictory stories, in which they frequently change even their own names. An experienced American spe-



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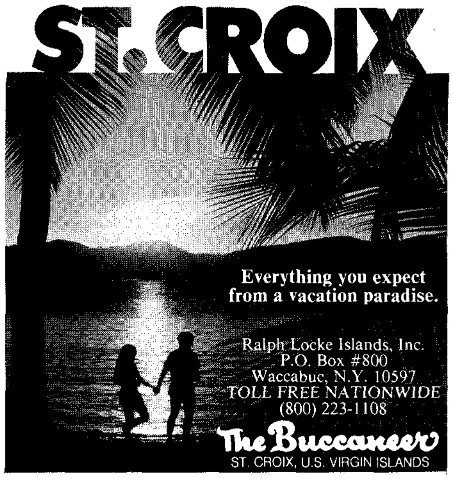

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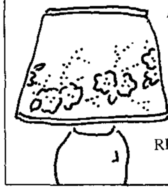

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cialist says, "An interrogator may say 'Well, Ahmed, what about—' and will be interrupted by the man and told 'My name is Walid.' They change the salient facts of their stories, and could even be telling the truth, or partial truths, at times, but no one would know." Typically, a captured terrorist will have several different passports and currencies, and also lots of telephone numbers with coded entries.

Abu Nidal's training groups are small; an individual learns how to do one thing very well. Each has minimal contact with other members of the network, and none at all with its leaders. The members live and work in the shadows. Abu Nidal's resident in Europe is a mysterious character named Samir Kadar, who is as much feared for his violent ways as the leader himself. Kadar has run many operations, including the attack on the Rome airport just after Christmas, 1985, in which fourteen people, including a child, were killed. Kadar lived in Rome for many years, under the name Rouphael Nabih. More recently, he has lived in Sweden, as a Mr. Saloranta, a name borrowed from a Finnish woman he married there who is believed to have had no knowledge of her husband's calling. Counterterrorism authorities thought for a time last summer that Kadar was dead; his fingerprints turned up in the wreckage of a car that had blown up in Athens on July 11th and killed at least two people. But the forensic people were unable to match any of the torn body parts to Kadar, and the likelihood is that his fingerprints were planted, perhaps to create the impression that he was dead (just as Abu Nidal has sometimes been wrongly thought to be dead). "Kadar is alive," an American counterterrorism figure says. "He is today's terrorist. He has an agenda, and we don't know what it is."

What the intelligence community knows about the groups, including their links to one another and to governments that sponsor terrorism, is meagre compared with what it doesn't know. For example, Washington has never been able to determine just where the American hostages are being held or to identify the people who abducted most of them. The "take" from Israel's chief intelligence-gathering agency, the legendary Mossad, is no better than that from anyone else, and is actually less useful than what the Americans obtain independently. "Mossad's intelligence in Lebanon is lousy," a senior American diplomat says. The Mossad never understood the force and intensity of Lebanon's Shiite community and guessed, wrongly, that it wouldn't resist Israel's invasion of Lebanon in June of 1982. What the Mossad learned later about the Hezbollah came from American intelligence sources. Today, Israeli intelligence is paying the price for accumulated misestimates and for a decline in morale that set in after the fiasco in Lebanon. Also, over the years, Israel has tended to devote more of its efforts to containing moderates than to coping with extremists. Arafat was—perhaps still is—judged the real enemy.

ATTEMPTED bombings of airliners aren't new. Since the assault on the Honolulu-bound Pan Am 747 in 1982, there have been fifteen such attempts. Four of them caused the loss of the aircraft and everyone aboard. In the other cases, either the act was forestalled or the bomb didn't go off or it exploded during flight without disabling the aircraft. Semtex isn't new, either. Every modern army has a variant of it. What is new is the technology involved in both confecting and concealing the bombs made with it. To begin with, there is the availability of an array of consumer items built around microcircuitry and small enough to fit easily into luggage. No longer does the aspirant destroyer of airplanes rely on a dry-cell battery, wires, and an alarm clock. Perhaps significantly, each of the last two targeted flights—Pan Am 103 and the Korean Air Lines aircraft en route from Baghdad to Seoul in November of 1987—was destroyed.

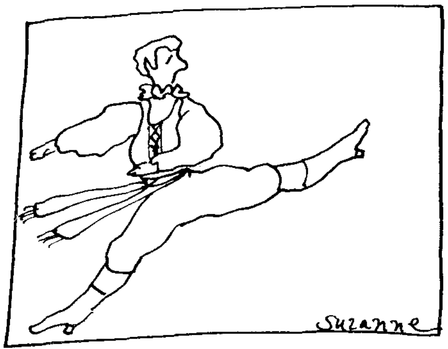
Besides taking what technology offers, accomplished bombmakers in the Middle East have applied their creative gifts to luggage; that is, to finding ways of concealing explosives, detonators, and barometric-pressure devices within bags of every description. Hard suitcases on wheels, briefcases, bowling bags have all been artistically transmuted into lethal weapons. For a while, one of the terrorist groups favored blue Samsonite bags, and passengers who were travelling with such luggage found themselves being delayed inexplicably in terminals while their luggage was subjected to exhaustive screening. Even careful inspection by trained examiners may fail to detect the explosive nature of a cleverly altered bag, which will have Semtex or some similar stuff within its lining and walls. The miniaturized electronic components used to time and trigger the bomb are built into the hardware—hasps, locks. The Semtex itself is all but undetectable by current X-ray machines. Also, although Semtex is forty times as powerful as most other explosives, it is a wholly stable substance and (if it isn't wired to a detonating mechanism) can be tossed about like a beanbag at no risk to anyone.

If German police hadn't rolled up a part of Jibril's operation—and done so in Frankfurt—he still might have been a prime suspect in the Pan Am affair but would not have been the only one. Abu Nidal, too, would have made the short list, even though the modus operandi doesn't fit him or his senior hit man, Samir Kadar, as well as it does Jibril. The Abu Nidal group is thought to have bombed airplanes before, and once to great effect: its hand was seen to be behind the explosion and loss of a Gulf Air flight from Karachi to Abu Dhabi in September of 1983. All the passengers and crew were lost —a hundred and twelve people.

The lead suspect in the Pan Am bombing, however, would have been Abu Ibrahim—the nom de guerre of Hussein al-Umari, who is the founder of a group called Arab Organization of 15 May (the date of Israel's creation) and the godfather of Middle East bombmakers. "He is a virtuoso," one intelligence figure says. Abu Ibrahim's M.O. would probably have placed him well ahead of Jibril on the list of those most capable of blowing up Pan Am 103, and investigators suspect that, given the bomb's sophistication, his group probably made it. He is believed to have made the Semtex bombs that were used against the Pan Am 747 en route to Honolulu in 1982 and against the T.W.A. flight bound for Athens in 1986. The list of explosions he has inspired on and above the ground is a long one.

Perhaps the most alarming and revealing of his ventures—among those we know about—was a plot to blow up five airliners belonging in some combination to Pan Am, British Airways, and El Al. The operation unfolded in late 1983 and continued into the spring of 1984. Abu Ibrahim artistically altered five suitcases, each equipped with a barometric-pressure device and a miniaturized energy cell. The package of components was no bigger than a digital watch. At least two of his operatives, Muhammad Rashid and Fuad Hussein Shara, had the task of maneuvering the suitcases aboard the targeted airplanes. The M.O. involved using women to carry the bags onto the airplanes as passengers. Rashid is now in prison in Greece, and the indictment against him alleged that he "would recruit and help to recruit persons to wittingly and unwittingly transport explosives." (The two-stop bomb allows the passenger to accompany a bag at no risk for the first leg of its journey. A woman who was probably working under Rashid's direction carried the bomb that blew a hole in the T.W.A. flight on its approach to Athens in 1986; she had left the aircraft in Rome.)

In December of 1983, Western intelligence agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency, learned that the 15 May group had deployed the five suitcases, probably in Athens. Shara had given one of them to a British woman there with whom he was associated; she was travelling to Tel Aviv to buy religious artifacts for sale elsewhere, and was unaware that her bag contained a bomb. Fortunately, the bomb didn't go off. Shortly afterward, C.I.A. people in Athens informed Greek authorities of the plot. (They had been unaware of it.) They examined the woman's suitcase themselves and were unable to detect Abu Ibrahim's alteration, at which point C.I.A. experts moved in and did manage to pierce the bag's disguise. The Greeks then arrested Shara, and they interrogated him for the next three months; they shared nothing of what they learned with the Americans—whom they accused of carrying out independent operations in Athens—or with anyone else. The rest of the tale is grimmer still. The Greeks spirited Shara out of the country on a fake passport—Turkish, at that—and he hasn't been seen since. Within the intelligence community, the C.I.A. stood accused of moving prematurely against the operation and thereby not only failing to roll it up but also placing at risk the agent, a Jordanian, who had penetrated the 15 May organization and revealed the plot. He was then killed. As for the four remaining suitcases, not long after Shara vanished one of them was spotted at an international airport shortly before it was to be loaded onto an airliner. The others are still unaccounted for. When Pan Am 103 was lost, some terrorism specialists immediately speculated that the weapon might have been one of the infamous five.



THE incoming Bush Administration seemed tempted at first to match the harsh but futile rhetoric of its predecessor. America was "not helpless," Bush said, noting that it had weapons of reprisal, including warplanes, cruise missiles, and commando units. But since intelligence services cannot even determine the whereabouts of American hostages, threats of retribution have a tinny ring; and they have subsided. And thus far there are no answers to the questions arising from terrorism's changed agenda, or its exploitation of microelectronics, or the prospect that people who are even more skilled than their predecessors will be carrying out acts of greater ferocity. "No one knows what to do," one expert says.

The more daunting problems include airport security—detecting altered luggage, and shielding parked aircraft from trespass. Chemical weapons are another source of anxiety and deep uncertainty; terrorists may have access to them within four or five years, according to the standard mid-range estimate. Biological weapons might, in theory, also become available. However, they are far more difficult and dangerous to handle than chemical weapons, and they have a brief shelf life. But though the sci-fi nightmare about biological weapons in terrorist hands is currently seen as no more real than that, techniques of genetic engineering could be used to create ever more stable (and usable) chemical toxins—and to create them in a smaller, cleaner environment. Distinguishing between the technology for chemical weapons and that for biological weapons is difficult.

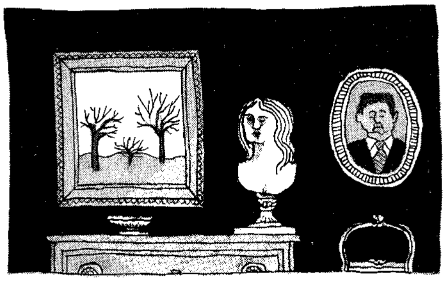
Pan Am 103 raised questions about the usefulness of advance information, or warnings. Can airlines, if they are warned, be relied on to take additional precautions? And does it matter whether they take precautions or not if the terrorists have done their considerable best to outmaneuver airline and airport security? And should official warnings to airlines of terrorist schemes be shared with the public? It's not as if Pan Am and the other American carriers in Frankfurt weren't on notice that their flights from there were threatened. On November 10th, two weeks after a part of Jibril's operation was nabbed by the police in Frankfurt, West German intelligence sent an eight-page memorandum to the carriers alerting them to the possibility of a bombing, and enclosing a photograph of a Toshiba Boombeat, a model very much like the one used against Pan Am 103. A week later, the Federal Aviation Administration issued what is called an aviation-security bulletin, which described the Toshiba in its altered state. The bulletin noted the presence of approximately eleven ounces of a "plastic-type explosive wrapped in a metallic-coated Tobler brand candy wrapper," plus an electronic detonator and "a barometric device connected to a computer chip, which was believed functional and apparently part of the trigger or arming function."

"They don't use those"—the barometric devices—"to blow up cars or trains," says Monte R. Belger, an associate administrator of the F.A.A. and the official in charge of security matters there. The bulletin was "an effort to raise the airlines' sensitivity to danger," he explains.

Four days after the F.A.A. put out the bulletin, British authorities issued a similar warning, but only to their own carriers. Then an element of black comedy intruded. On December 5th, an anonymous person called the American Embassy in Helsinki to say that a bomb was going to be put aboard a Pan Am flight out of Frankfurt. The warning proved to be a hoax. Two weeks later, on the nineteenth, the British produced another warning, which described the Toshiba, provided a color photograph, and observed that the device was intended for use against an American target and was designed to evade airport screening procedures. Also, there was guidance on how to detect bomb-bearing radio cassette players; for example, an altered set won't play when it's turned on. Remarkably, this well-stocked message was neither telexed nor faxed to airline security offices but was instead sent by regular mail—at the peak of the Christmas season. The airport in Manchester received its copy on January 12th. Britain's Minister of Transport, Paul Channon, conceded that the December 19th warning should perhaps have been sent out by telex, but also said, "The sad fact is that nothing my department did or could have done would have made the slightest difference." Pan Am's position is that it had already stepped up security procedures (it is unclear how) and so the British warning, even if it had arrived quickly, would have made no difference.

It has been noted that Pan Am may not have rescreened transit luggage earmarked for Pan Am 103. A spokesman for the airline was authorized to tell me that luggage from the Frankfurt leg of the flight was put directly aboard the 747 at Heathrow without being reëxamined, whereas the luggage of transit passengers from other than Pan Am flights who were proceeding on 103 was examined. What he was describing is standard procedure, but the fact is that transit luggage is distinctly vulnerable on the tarmac. Equally, the contents of carry-on bags can be altered in transit lounges, the security of which varies sharply from one airport to another.

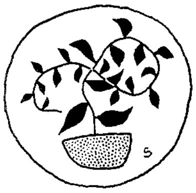
Earlier this year, I.B.M. warned its employees against flying American carriers in Europe and the Middle East. Some other American companies followed suit, and families of the victims of Pan Am 103 are urging the Bush Administration to make the details of security bulletins public, so that travellers can measure the risks of flying. The issue, however painful, doesn't strike the responsible officials as complicated. Disclosing threats would just inspire more of them, both from terrorists and from screwballs, because the threats would then have vastly more impact, and might even shut down a large portion of air travel for a time. Moreover, the intelligence on which valid warnings are based would doubtless dry up as terrorists set about plugging leaks. "Publicizing every threat . . . will have the paradoxical result of making us less, rather than more, safe," Transportation Secretary Samuel Skinner said in early April.



The obvious downside of this position is the example of Pan Am 103—the risk that, despite official warnings, a bomb goes off and destroys an airplane. Also, the airlines find most of the F.A.A.'s security bulletins to be unspecific, if not vague. Typically, a bulletin will alert carriers to a general threat to American air travel in Europe and the Middle East. In any case, new regulations will require airlines to show within three days that they have reacted to such bulletins by taking specified precautions or other measures deemed appropriate, such as special surveillance or extra-rigorous baggage screening.

Another new requirement—installing advanced bomb-detection equipment at international airports—poses what seems a pivotal question: Can advanced technology neutralize the threat from miniaturized and all but undetectable bombs? Monte Belger, of the F.A.A., is optimistic. "The threat has clearly changed," he says, noting that a system for detecting guns used in hijackings did evolve successfully. He believes that a new device known as the T.N.A.—for "thermal neutron analysis"—will at some point constitute a large part of the solution. The machine bombards luggage with radiation and then analyzes gamma rays emitted by the bags to detect the chemical signatures of plastic explosives. The first of the T.N.A. devices was supposed to be delivered to the Trans World Airlines terminal at John F. Kennedy Airport in June, but isn't likely now to arrive before September. Five others will be delivered by January of next year, although just where they will be delivered isn't yet clear, and sixty more are in the pipeline. According to Belger, the device has been tested on forty thousand bags, and the F.A.A. "is comfortable with the detection rate and the false-alarm rate." The device, he adds, "can detect all commercial and military explosives, and can process a piece of luggage every six seconds."

"Skeptical" is a fair description of the attitude of some interested parties, including Pan Am, which feels that six seconds per bag is too long. The airline's calculation is as follows: During the summer—its peak season—Pan Am has thirty to thirty-five scheduled departures from J.F.K. every day and more than four hundred transatlantic crossings a week. The airplanes used on most of these flights are 747s, which will average about four hundred passengers per flight. Pan Am reckons on twelve hundred bags per 747 flight during this period. Using a T.N.A. device to screen luggage for one flight alone would take two hours. That is too much time, says Pan Am, and notes that the machine would have to be used selectively, and that raises the question of how the carrier might distinguish bags that ought to be screened from bags that happen to accompany wholly reliable passengers. The false-alarm rate, though it is low, will create other delays.



Pan Am has also noted that T.N.A. machines present a potential health hazard, in that metal objects within the bags will remain irradiated for a day or two. Another question turns on who will pay for the devices, which are estimated to cost nearly a million dollars each. The Administration expects the airlines to absorb the cost by passing it on to travellers as a security tax on their tickets. The airlines feel that Washington should shoulder the cost, if only because terrorist acts are directed not at them but, rather, at official policy. Also, there is already a security surcharge of three dollars on international tickets, and, more important, there is an aviation trust fund, amounting to more than six billion dollars, that is held by the government and could be used to pay for new equipment. But spending any of this money would have the politically awkward effect of moving it to the deficit side of the ledger, thereby adding to the swollen federal deficit.

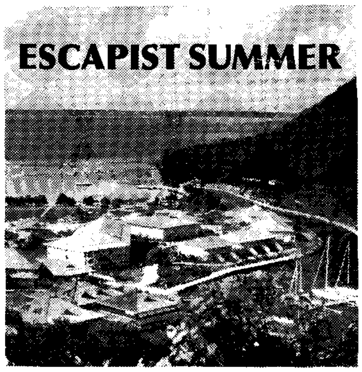
Belger doesn't disagree that the T.N.A. is a trifle slow for its intended role and has some other flaws. "But the best is the enemy of the good," he argues, adding that research and development continue, and that the F.A.A. hopes one day to have better detection systems—mobile, and usable in passenger terminals. As for the health hazard, he notes that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has licensed the T.N.A., although not for use with carry-on luggage. And he doubts whether, in the end, cost will be a tough issue; he thinks the airlines will shoulder it. "A T.N.A. device will cost no more than a new tug to move the 747s around," he says.

On another and larger point, a number of experts would disagree with Belger's contention that technology must supply the larger part of the answer. "Our research is focussed on technology," Belger says. "We are trying to minimize the role of human decision-making," which he sees as the weakest link in the process of promoting airport security.

No system, especially one that relies on advanced technology, is likely to be better than the people operating it. What's mainly needed, according to some specialists, is better people, better training, and better supervision. Airport-security workers are generally poorly paid, and the job turnover rate is high.

Airports are small cities, and in some communities they are the largest employers. Most of them were built at a time when bombings and hijackings were not a concern, and that has meant that security procedures have had to be somehow wedged into operations. Today, international airports present a mishmash of divergent security standards which seems to mock notions of a technological solution. In some airports—who knows how many?—a lethal bag could be insinuated into the luggage bound for a targeted airplane by an airport employee with access to the loading area. At J.F.K., forty-seven thousand people have passes that provide access to the tarmac. The number at Heathrow is thirty-eight thousand. J.F.K. "may have to spend 27 million dollars to install a new system of computerized locks on doors and gates," according to the *Times*. "Yet the miles of chain link fence surrounding the runways will remain easily breached." J.F.K. still doesn't have bomb-sniffing dogs.

In late March, while British authorities were preoccupied with the Pan Am 103 investigation and security at



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Heathrow, three audacious young people made the essential point by slipping undetected into a maintenance area and boarding an unattended 747 belonging to British Airways. They thoughtfully filmed the deed, which included taking possession of the flight deck. Their film was later shown on the Independent Television News.

Security at most international airports is shared by governments, airlines, and the airports themselves. Governments set standards but normally do not pay for or provide the people who must enforce them; the airlines screen passengers and their baggage; and the airports are supposed to guarantee the security of airplanes and access to them. Some airlines do more about security than others. Israel's El Al is a model, but it is a small airline with a few flights, and the major carriers just cannot emulate its punctilious approach to security.

Government must take a far more active role in running airports, according to American carriers, some of which feel strongly on this point. They also feel that since the threat from terrorism is concentrated in foreign airports the F.A.A. should do much more than it is doing about vetting security procedures at the forty-five high-risk foreign airports from which American carriers operate. The logic of the airlines' argument is valid, but no part of the problem is easy or uncomplicated. Nine of the terminals at J.F.K., for example, are owned by nine different airlines, representing nine different countries, and those nine carriers are not obliged to follow the same security procedures as their American counterparts.

Not much can be confidently said now except that, first, the ripple effect of Pan Am 103's last flight is vast, and, second, while getting there was never half the fun, the nature of air travel is going to change in ways that will greatly increase the hassle but no doubt provide greater security. One is tempted to offer a third point: Terrorism feeds on the bitterness and frustration of people for whom the future seems to offer nothing, and on the attention paid to acts of violence by those of us who feel threatened by them. Another dynamic—such as a credible peace process in the Middle East—might upstage and gradually neutralize terrorism.

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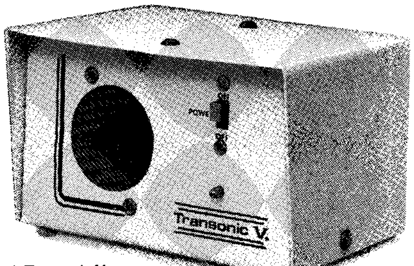

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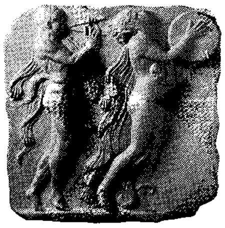

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

The City Gone Psycho

IN "Batman," the movement of the camera gives us the sensation of swerving (by radar) through the sinister nighttime canyons of Gotham City. We move swiftly among the forbidding, thickly clustered skyscrapers and dart around the girders and pillars of their cavelike underpinnings. This is the brutal city where crime festers—a city of alleys, not avenues. In one of these alleys, Bruce Wayne as a child watched, helpless, as his parents were mugged and senselessly shot down. Now a grown man and fabulously wealthy, Bruce (Michael Keaton) patrols the city from the rooftops. He has developed his physical strength to the utmost, and, disguised in body armor, a cowl, and a wide-winged cape, and with the aid of a high-tech arsenal, he scales buildings and swoops down on thugs and mobsters—Batman.

There's a primitive visual fascination in the idea of a princeling obsessed with vengeance who turns himself into a creature of the night, and the director, Tim Burton, has given the movie a look, a tone, an eerie intensity. Burton, who's thirty, has a macabre sensibility, with a cheerfulness that's infectious; his three films ("Pee-wee's Big Adventure" and "Beetlejuice" are the other two) get you laughing at your own fear of death.

Seen straight on, the armored Batman is as stiff and strong-jawed as a Wagnerian hero. His cowl-mask has straight-up sides that end in erect ears; he gives the impression of standing at attention all the time. (He's on guard duty.) But something else is going on, too. The eye slits reveal only the lower part of his eyes—you perceive strange, hooded flickers of anger. When Batman is in motion, what you see can recall the movies, such as "The Mark of Zorro" and the 1930 mystery comedy "The Bat Whispers," that the eighteen-year-old cartoonist Bob Kane had in mind when he concocted the comic-book hero, in 1939. Though the Tim Burton film is based on Kane's characters, it gets some of its funky, nihilistic charge from more recent "graphic novels" about Batman, like Frank Miller's 1986 "The Dark Knight Returns" and Alan Moore's 1988 "The Killing Joke." This powerfully glamorous new "Batman," with sets angled and lighted like film noir, goes beyond pulp; it gallops into the cocky unknown.

In the movie's absurdist vision, Batman's antagonist is the sniggering mobster Jack Napier (Jack Nicholson), who turns into the leering madman the Joker. Clearly, Batman and the Joker are intended to represent good and evil counterparts, or, at least, twin freaks, locked together in combat; it was Jack Napier who made an orphan of Bruce Wayne, and it was Batman who dropped Jack into the vat of toxic chemicals that disfigured him. That's the basic plan. But last year's writers' strike started just as the movie was set to go into production, and the promising script, by Sam Hamm (it reads beautifully), never got its final shaping; the touching up that Warren Skaaren (and uncredited others) gave it didn't develop the characters or provide the turning points that were needed. With the young hipster Keaton and the aging hipster Nicholson cast opposite each other, we expect an unholy taunting camaraderie—or certainly some recognition on Batman's part that he and the Joker have a similarity. And we do get a tease now and then: when the two meet, their actions have the formality of Kabuki theatre. But the underwritten movie slides right over the central conflict: good and evil hardly know each other.

At times, it's as if pages of the script had drifted away. The mob kingpin (Jack Palance, in a hearty, ripe performance) is toppled by Jack Napier, who moves to take control of the city, but we're not tipped to what new corruption he has in mind. We wait for the moment when the photojournalist Vicki Vale (Kim Basinger), who's in love with Bruce Wayne and is drawn to Batman, will learn they're the same person. She's just about to when the scene (it's in her apartment) is interrupted by the Joker, who barges in with his henchmen—we expect him to carry her away. The revelation of Batman's identity is suspended (we never get to see it), and the Joker trots off without his prize. After this double non-whammy, a little air seems to leak out of the movie. And it's full of these missed moments; the director just lets them go. Vicki and Bruce, dining together, are seated at opposite ends of an immense banquet table in a baronial hall in Wayne Manor; two thousand years of show business have prepared us for a zinging payoff—we feel almost deprived when we don't get it. Yet these underplayed scenes have a pleasing suggestiveness. The dinner scene, for example, shows us that Bruce is flexible, despite his attraction to armor. (He collects it.) And Vicki quick-

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ly realizes that the Bruce Wayne-Batman identity is less important than the question Is he married only to his Batman compulsion or is he willing to share his life with her?

The movie has a dynamics of feeling; it has its own ache. Michael Keaton's poor-little-rich-boy hero is slightly dissociated, somewhat depressed, a fellow who can take his dream vehicle, the Batmobile, for granted. How do you play a guy who likes to go around in a bat costume? Keaton has thought out this fellow's hesitations, his peculiarity, his quietness. In some situations, the unarmed Bruce is once again a passive, helpless kid. (In a triste scene at night, he hangs by his ankles on gym equipment, rocking softly—trying to lull himself to sleep.) Keaton's Bruce-Batman is really the only human being in the movie; he gives it gravity and emotional coloring. This is a man whose mission has taken over his life. The plangent symphonic score, by Danny Elfman, might be the musical form of his thoughts; it's wonderfully morose superhero music.

When Nicholson's Joker appears for the first time, the movie lights up like a pinball machine: the devil has arrived. (Nicholson is playing the role Keaton played in "Beetlejuice.") The Joker is marvellously dandified—a fashion plate. The great bohemian chapeaus and the playing-card zoot suits, in purple, green, orange, and aqua, that Bob Ringwood has designed for him have a harlequin chic. They're very like the outfits the illustrator Brian Boland gave the character in "The Killing Joke," and Nicholson struts in them like a homicidal minstrel, dancing to hurdy-gurdy songs by Prince—the Joker's theme music. But the grin carved into the Joker's face doesn't have the horror of the one on Conrad Veidt's face in the 1927 "The Man Who Laughs" (where Bob Kane acknowledges he took it from). Veidt played a man who never forgot his mutilation. Nicholson's Jack Napier is too garish to suffer from having been turned into a clown; the mutilation doesn't cripple him, it fulfills him. And so his wanting to get back at Batman is just crazy spite.

This may work for the kids in the audience, and the Joker's face stirs up a child's confused fear of—and delight in—clowns. (They're like kids made hideous and laughed at.) But possibly the Joker's comic-book dazzle diminishes the film's streak of morbid grandeur—the streak that links this "Batman" to the reverbs that "The Phantom of the Opera" and "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" set off in us. When the adversaries have their final, moonlight encounter, among the gargoyles on the bell tower of Gotham's crumbling, abandoned cathedral, they could be like the Phantom of the Opera split in two, but there's pain in Keaton, there's no pain in Nicholson. The Joker may look a little like Olivier as the John Osborne vaudevillian, but he isn't human: he's all entertainer, a glinting-eyed cartoon—he's still springing gags after he's dead. This interpretation is too mechanical to be fully satisfying. And is Nicholson entertainer enough? He doesn't show the physical elegance and inventiveness we may hope for.

The master flake Tim Burton understands what there is about Batman that captures the moviegoer's imagination. The picture doesn't give us any help on the question of why Bruce Wayne, in creating an alternate identity, picked a pointy-eared, satanic-looking varmint. (Was it simply to gain a sense of menace and to intimidate his prey?) But Burton uses the fluttering Batman enigmatically, playfully. He provides potent, elusive images that draw us in (and our minds do the rest). There may be no more romantic flight of imagination in modern movies than the drive that Vicki and Batman take, by Batmobile, rocketing through a magical forest. Yet though we're watching a gothic variation of the lonely-superhero theme, we're never allowed to forget our hero's human limitations. He's a touchingly comic fellow. When he's all dressed up in his bat drag, he still thinks it necessary to identify himself by saying, in a confidential tone, "I'm Batman."

MEN
WORKING
IN
TREES
Albert Hubbell

The movie's darkness is essential to its hold on us. The whole conception of Batman and Gotham City is a nighttime vision—a childlike fantasy of the big city that the muggers took over. The caped crusader who can find his way around in the miasmal dark is the only one who can root out the hoods. The good boy Batman has his shiny-toy weapons (the spiked gauntlets, the utility belt equipped with projectile launcher, even the magnificent Batwing fighter plane), but he's alone. The bad boys travel in packs: the Joker and his troupe of sociopaths break into the Flugelheim Museum, merrily slashing and defiling the paintings—the Joker sees himself as an artist of destruction.

Batman and the Joker are fighting for the soul of the city that spawned them. We see what shape things are in right from the opening scenes. Gotham City, with its jumble of buildings shooting miles and miles up into the dirty skies, is the product of uncontrolled greed. Without sunshine or greenery, the buildings look like derelicts. This is New York City deliberately taken just one step beyond the present; it's the city as you imagine it when you're really down on it. It's Manhattan gone psycho. But even when you're down on it you can get into your punk fantasies about how swollen it is, how blighted and yet horribly alive.

The designer, Anton Furst, seems to have got into that kind of jangled delight, putting together domes and spires, elongated tenements, a drab city hall with statues bowed down in despair, and streets and factories with the coal-mine glow of the castles and battlements in "Chimes at Midnight." Gotham City has something of the sculptural fascination of the retro-future cities in "Blade Runner" and "Brazil"—it's like Fritz Lang's "Metropolis" corroded and cankered. If H. G. Wells' Time Machine took you there, you'd want to escape back to the present. Still, you revel in this scary Fascistic playground: the camera crawls voluptuously over the concrete and the sewers, and the city excites you—it has belly-laugh wit.

When Gotham City celebrates its two-hundredth birthday, the big parade balloons are filled with poison gas—an inspiration of the Joker's. (He rides on a float, jiggling to the music; his painted red grin has wing tips.) Paranoia and comic-book cheesiness don't defeat Tim Burton; he feels the kick in them—he likes their style. The cinematographer, Roger Pratt, brings theatrical artifice to just about every shot—a high gorgeousness, with purples and blacks that are like our dream of a terrific rock concert. The movie even has giant spotlights (and the Bat-signal from the original comic books). This spectacle about an avenging angel trying to protect a city that's already an apocalyptic mess is an American variant of "Wings of Desire." It has a poetic quality, but it moves pop fast. The masked man in the swirling, windblown cape has become the hero of a comic opera that's mean and anarchic and blissful. It has so many unpredictable spins that what's missing doesn't seem to matter much. The images sing.

"GHOSTBUSTERS II" has a nice, lazy, unforced rhythm. I found it much more enjoyable than the first "Ghostbusters"—the actors seem more convivial and the special effects less labored. (Actually, the effects are so frowzy you can just about ignore them.) It's a big comedy, but it's light on its feet, and the throwaway jokes are weightless—they *ping!* and dissolve in the air. You can't remember what you're laughing at, but you feel great.

The comic premise is that the collective angry energy of Manhattanites is feeding an underground river of boiling slime, which is rising; our bad vibes are literally destroying the city. The Ghostbusters were hounded out of business five years ago (the city sued them for the mess they made when they rescued it from poltergeists). They come back together to drive out a new crop of demons and turn New Yorkers' attitudes around, so the goo will subside.

Luckily, the director, Ivan Reitman, doesn't need to build scenes here. The script, by Harold Ramis and Dan Aykroyd, is a floating crap game, like the scripts for the Hope and Crosby "Road" pictures. Assorted comedians simply come in and out of the scenes, dropping one-liners. The chief dropper, Bill Murray, can perform casual miracles with a simple joke. He actually gets by in scenes where he just plays with an eight-month-old baby boy. Murray has changed psychologically since the first "Ghostbusters": he isn't playing the grungy, derisive outsider anymore—he's mellowed. Yet he's just as funny. In this movie, he's obviously nuts about the heroine (Sigourney Weaver) and nuts about the kid. But he isn't sentimental. I can't think of any other comedian who has brought off this kind of transition—who has turned into a friendly, responsible guy while retaining access to the sources of his comedy. Murray's humor is still different from anybody else's. (Even when he does a Groucho routine, posing alluringly on a bed, the come-on is his own.)

In the scene where Murray is the cynical, know-it-all host of a cable-TV talk show called "World of the Psychic," and in the courtroom scene, featuring Rick Moranis as the Ghostbusters' attorney, the movie is like a perfectly achieved edition of "Saturday Night Live." Ramis (in a pompadour that makes him look like photographs of George S. Kaufman) has sly, succulent bits as an egotistic sadist; Moranis and Annie Potts make a lovely nerdy team of madly infatuated nearsighted lovers; and Cheech Marin, in a couple of cut-in reaction shots, is a winner each time. Ernie Hudson, who has an agreeable (not particularly comic) presence, gets a big laugh when a ghost train runs right through him and he looks "spooked." Probably the gag is meant to parody old racist set-ups, but you can't be sure, and it may leave you uneasy. Apart from that, the movie, even at its sloppiest (there are a lot of starts that don't go anywhere), produces nothing but the good vibes its heroes are dedicated to.

The goo—it's pink—has an unfathomable connection with an evil seventeenth-century Moldavian whose portrait dominates the room where Weaver restores paintings, under the love-hungry supervision of a geeky bureaucrat named Janosz Poha, played by Peter MacNicol. Poha's Carpathian Upper West Side diction has to navigate through his toothy smile; it's a precarious journey, and the pure silliness of it—all the childish playacting it recalls—can make you surprisingly happy.

—PAULINE KAEL

EDITORS' NOTE: Miss Kael will be away for most of the summer. Terrence Rafferty will cover movies in her absence.

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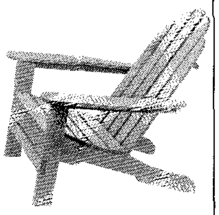

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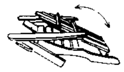

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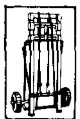

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IN FASHION

For Better or for Worse?

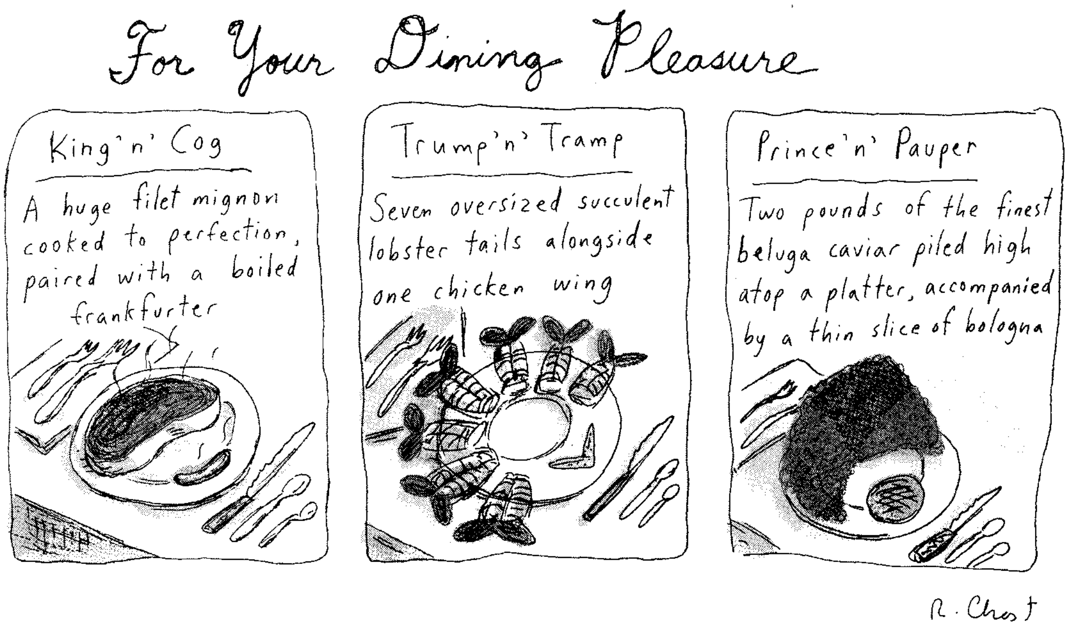
FOR many of us who stood on the beach in the nineteen-seventies and looked on while the maid of honor sang "Both Sides Now" and the barefoot couple plighted its troth with excerpts from Khalil Gibran's "The Prophet," the news that in the eighties weddings seemed to be taking a turn for the more traditional came as a relief. Who could have foreseen that the results would often be, in their way, no less preposterous? Here we are, in an era when etiquette has gone the way of hats and gloves—when no one writes a thank-you note anymore, much less wears black to a funeral—and yet people planning their weddings turn to the "experts" and slavishly follow their every instruction.

An entire industry stands at the ready. "From the moment you announce your engagement, life becomes a matter of questions, choices, decisions, an exciting whirl of plans and preparations," begins a promotion for Liberty of London in a recent issue of the English magazine *Brides and Setting Up Home*. "Your dress. Your shoes. Your bridesmaids. The cake. The flowers. And your first home. Colours, fabrics, patterns, plates, your china and glass, your table linen, pretty sheets for your bedroom, rugs for your floor." *Brides*, in America; *Sposabella*, in Italy; *Mariages*, in France, strike a similar tone—friendly, experienced, breathless. To my mind, which is perhaps slightly cynical but not entirely lacking in the capacity for romance, the anxiety and fatigue brought on by leafing through these magazines, full of ads for video cameramen, makeup artists, and rental limousines, would be reason enough to elope.

Over the past few years, I've watched maybe a dozen friends, not all of them with an active interest in fashion but most with a distinct sense of style, step into bridal gowns and become icons—virtually anonymous, life-size versions of those dolls perched on the top tier of wedding cakes that look like Busby Berkeley sets in butter-cream frosting. The dresses my friends wore were not all the same, of course—some had bouffant sleeves, some had straight sleeves, some had jewel necklines, some had scoop necklines, some had trains, some didn't—but the effect was similar, and it was straitjacketing. Another friend, who recently managed to find a bridal gown that didn't compromise her image of herself, proudly announced, "I don't look a bride in it—I look like me." Now, why is it that the idea of being a bride has come to be so narrowly proscribed? Why is it that bridal gowns seem to exist in some freeze-dried never-never land—outside time, outside fashion—that bears no relation whatsoever to the style of the decade we're living in? Why is it that we expect the image of a bride to remain constant when the way women see themselves—and the way our society sees women—is changing all the time? Why is it that we turn to the realm of fashion for so many of our fantasies but that when it comes to getting married—the subject of some of the most important fantasies in life—we turn our back on fashion? And this is the big mystery: Why is it that so many bridal gowns, however pretty, however ornate, and even grandiose, look so spectacularly bland?

The tradition that brides are now busy harking back to is in fact relatively brief and highly revisionist. Anne Schirrmeister, an art and costume historian and a former assistant curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, says, "It's not until the late nineteen-thirties or early forties that the wedding gown that's a one-shot deal comes along—the special dress that you put in a box so it can rot in the closet. That's also the point at which wedding dresses start to move away from what's in style and into their own peculiar tradition. Before that, wedding dresses were always worn again. Middle-class people often got married in their best clothes—not white but whatever color was chic at the time. In the eighteen-sixties, there were brides dressed in pastels, and a little later, with the introduction of aniline dyes, there were brides in shades of bronze and turquoise—bright, rich colors." In both France and England, for most of the nineteenth century the poor and the lower middle class got married in black silk. Schirrmeister has done research in Paris, going through middle- and lower-class death inventories. "You always find one black silk dress," she explains. "That is the person's best dress, and it had none of the connotations of mourning. Black meant formal, respectable—for important occasions. That's the dress the person got married in and attended her child's christening in and died in."

Schirrmeister says that when Queen Victoria married, in 1840, she wore white, breaking with royal tradition. Before that, royal brides had worn dresses made from cloth of silver. Victoria was seen in her own time as a modern bride, advocating a return to simplicity—which is, of course, not at all in keeping with the way we now think of her. "Victoria's wedding wasn't photographed," Schirrmeister adds, "and drawings of her dress weren't sent around, so she really had no influence in particular on wedding dress, but the clothes her children wore for their weddings were photographed, and the designs were circulated. Theirs was the first royal influence on wedding dresses outside court circles. Throughout the Victorian era and on into the twentieth century, brides who were socially ambitious imitated royalty by wearing white. There's a really interesting eyewitness account by Gertrude Jekyll, who talks about how pathetic it is that the laborers in the next village wear white and have pages, just like the royals, and don't realize how stupid they look. In general, white wedding dresses throughout the nineteenth century follow the fashionable look of the day. Basically, they look just like an evening dress, because white was often worn in the evening. Or, for weddings in the morning, the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bridal gowns looked like white street dresses, made of the best cloth that the bride could afford.”

Today, when women think of a “traditional” bridal gown, the dress they have in mind is usually a pastiche of elements from Dior's New Look and Victorian fashion: his off-the-shoulder necklines and full skirts; the mutton sleeves of the eighteen-thirties; the V-shaped waist, which was popular in the eighteen-forties and continued, on and off, throughout the nineteenth century (it's now standard attire for fairy-tale heroines as seen by Walt Disney); the long train and big bows, like bustles, reminiscent of the eighteen-eighties; and, God forbid, lace mitts. “I can't tell you how many otherwise sensible women want to wear mitts,” Schirrmeister says. “Mitts *were* Victorian, but the Victorians would never have worn them to get married in.”

THE bridal realm, as anyone who shops for a dress soon learns, is a world apart, off to one side of the world where the rest of life takes place, and its architects are designers—“specialists”—who mostly do nothing but bridal wear. For an industry founded on what it maintains is the most important event in a woman's life, its standards are, for the most part, appallingly low. In a recent edition of *Woman's Day's* “101 Wedding Ideas for Brides,” ads for San-Martin International Bridals, photographed at the Beverly Hills Hotel and other California vacation spots, show Mariska Hargitay, then of “Falcon Crest,” Lauralee Bell, of “The Young and the Restless,” and other TV actresses in effusive dresses, of polyester satin, peekaboo lace, and frothy ruffled tulle, that look like a cross between antebellum prom gowns and Hollywood negligees. At the top of the market is Pat Kerr, who draws on an extensive collection of antique fabrics and laces for the one-of-a-kind bridal gowns she designs. She recalls that when she got into the bridal business, nine years ago, the tulle veils were cheaply finished by machine with an overlock stitch; she introduced ribbon edging.

Kerr lays the credit for the resurgence of storybook weddings at the doorstep of Buckingham Palace. A generation of girls who watched the televised weddings of Prince Charles and Prince Andrew are now preparing to get married themselves, and she provides them with all the trappings: dresses for brides, bridesmaids, maids of honor, flower girls; she does antique-lace garters, which many brides later frame, and small silk satin cushions for bearing the rings, embroidered with slogans like “On This, Our Wedding Day.” In New York, her collection is sold at Martha, where the service is specialized, too. Lynn Manulis, who, with her mother, owns and manages Martha, says, “We have meetings with our clients about their photography sessions, to decide how they should wear their hair and makeup. Then we send one of the fitters to the wedding, to look after all the little last-minute alterations, to see that every hook is in place.”

Manulis talks about the importance of “participating in the dream” when it comes to selling wedding dresses. “These young women change right in front of your eyes,” she says. “The first thing is to take away all the trappings they come in with. I like to put them into a beautiful robe and talk to them, and then we go on from there. Really, you have to take each woman and separate her from all the others—it's like being a portrait painter. Most of them have fantasized about their wedding. And when they express themselves it requires a good listener.”

Oscar de la Renta, who occasionally makes a wedding dress as a favor to a client, goes about it in much the same way. “I suppose that bridal gowns are for first weddings,” he says, “and when you get married for the first time you have been thinking about it for twelve or twenty years, so every girl knows what she wants. I always ask to talk to the girl alone, without her mother. After all, it's the bride's day.”

“If you ever want to get to know a woman, do her wedding dress,” says the Broadway costume designer William Ivey Long, who from time to time designs bridal gowns for friends and private clients. “I always tell my friends who are getting married, ‘If you have the nerve to do this in your life, I certainly have the nerve to go through it with you. You deserve all the support you can get.’ It's a very bold thing, getting married. Women step into their bridal shoes, and the cold sweat of the ages comes over them. There's a lot of fear. And whatever I can do to assuage that fear, I do. That's what design is: preparing people to meet the twentieth century. It's a hard job.”

Here on the verge of the nineteen-nineties, however, most women, when it comes to facing their wedding day, take refuge in the styles of the past. “The girl who comes in in a Chanel suit can become the most fragile flower in the right gown,” Manulis says. “Then she sees herself not as the successful young executive woman, as she presented herself half an hour before, but as an extraordinary eighteenth-century beauty. She has found another part of her personality."

"They come in with their marvellous suits and their silk blouses, straight from the office," Carolina Herrera says. "The first thing they'll say to me is 'I dress very simply.' More often than not, the girl who comes in with that attitude and sees the transformation that takes place when she puts on a dress with a long train and a headpiece with flowers and lots of tulle decides in the end that that's all she wants."

WHAT is this atavistic Cinderella streak lurking deep in the heart of career girls? We're all shopping for the chance to try on some new identity, beyond the slightly frayed one we wear every day, but evening clothes afford us that opportunity—and not for one time only but on a fairly regular basis. In fact, the exercise of projecting oneself into a new character is more appropriate to an evening's diversion than to one's wedding day. A bride, to my mind, should be dressed not as someone she has never been before and will never be again but in keeping with the woman she has been and is and will continue to be, and, as it turns out, this requires a lot more imagination.

Most fashion designers observe the haute-couture custom of closing a show with a bridal gown, but usually it's a finale piece, not a dress to be made and sold, and often it's not so much a dress to be married in as a comment on marriage. Robert Molnar, a young American designer with a strong political bent, ended his collection of sexy, camouflage-printed sportswear for spring, 1983, with a bride in a minidress who had an MX missile chained to her ankle. As part of a Madeleine Vionnet exhibition two years ago, the Fashion Institute of Technology displayed her austere ivory silk-crêpe bridal gown from the late thirties, which, upon closer inspection, bears a remarkable resemblance to a nun's habit.

A handful of fashion designers have launched their own bridal lines. Scaasi's, for Eva Forsyth, and Carolina Herrera's are perfectly consistent with the styles of the other clothes they design—his are festive, souped-up, sometimes graceful, and hers are restrained, detailed, expensive-looking—but the appeal of their bridal collections extends beyond their regular customers to women who for their weddings aspire to be dressed by "society" designers. Herrera's wedding dress for Caroline Kennedy established her reputation as a bridal designer, the way the Emanuels' dress for Princess Diana established theirs. "I think brides are all the same," Herrera says. "They want to look pure and innocent, and very romantic at the same time."

This is not an outlook that accounts for the women—among them the models Elle MacPherson and Gail Elliott—who have chosen to get married in dresses by Azzedine Alaïa. His retail bridal collection, commissioned last year by Pronuptia, the largest manufacturer of mass-market bridal gowns in France, includes dresses made of stretch rayon, rubberized silk organza, or waterproof taffeta ("very sexy," Alaïa says, "for jumping in the swimming pool"), with full organza capuchins and white stretch wimples for the ceremony at the church. For the bride who is pregnant, Alaïa designs a dress that is tight and revealing, so as not to hide what he calls "the beautiful gift" that she brings to the wedding. In one photograph in the catalogue, the bride, in a siren white stretch sheath that hugs her every contour, is smoking a cigarette.

Pronuptia inaugurated the "Pronuptia vu par . . . " series two years ago, with a suite of bridal gowns by Jean-Paul Gaultier—among them a two-piece affair with a zip-front midriff top and a mid-calf silk-taffeta skirt, pouffed and hobbled at the knees (and shown with white fish-net stockings worn *over* flat shoes), and a white jersey sheath with sleeves that end in gloves and with a deep V neck, cut to slide off the shoulder, exposing a white ruffled tulle-and-stretch-satin bustier underneath. This season, Thierry Mugler has designed four bridal outfits for Pronuptia—among them a white hooded, wide-leg jumpsuit, and a strapless white cotton-piqué dress with wings appliquéd on the bodice and with a short full-circle skirt supported by tulle underskirts (this last shown with white stockings, seamed up the front).

It is said that all brides, regardless of their looks, are beautiful, because nothing becomes a woman more than the

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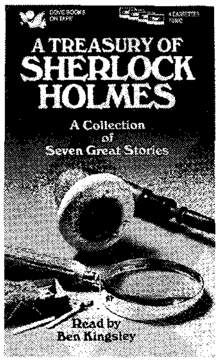
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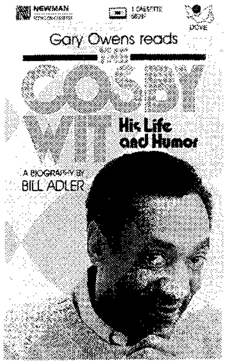

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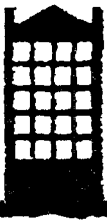

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knowledge that she is loved and because that knowledge is never more certain than on her wedding day. (The personification of Estée Lauder's Beautiful, a fragrance, is the famous model Paulina Porizkova dressed as a bride: "This is your moment to be beautiful," the caption in the ad says.) A bride is also supposed to be young, demure, graceful, happy, and serene. But what a bride is *not* supposed to be is in some ways more telling. She is not sexy. The so-called illusion neckline, a deep décolletage veiled with a sheer lace turtleneck, is as close to racy as most brides are permitted to come. She is not skeptical or ironic, since these are qualities one comes by through experience. Nor is she funny—humor runs the danger of putting things into perspective. She is not worldly wise. The bride is a symbol, and in symbolic terms she is blank; the story of her life is yet to be written.

In an era when most women married young, leaving the shelter of their parents to embark on a family of their own, when few middle-class women worked, when childhood and adolescence flowed directly into marriage, and womanhood arrived a little later, these notions may have been closer to experience. But despite all the things that haven't changed for women in the past fifteen or twenty years, this much is different: a woman's future is no longer sealed on her wedding day. Weddings pick up where fairy tales leave off. Somewhere between the spun-sugar vision of the Sleeping Beauty awakened by the Prince's kiss and the fact of the matter—which is that, married or single, a woman is responsible for herself—lies a narrow aisle that is difficult to negotiate. Today, when many women bring to married life a truckload of furniture and a backlog of memories—to say nothing of children by a previous husband—the image of the traditional bride seems downright disingenuous.

The most recent bridal gown Long made, for a friend in her thirties, was a deliberate departure from the Cinderella tradition. "I knew what I didn't want," he says. "No ruffles, no lace, and no goddam seed pearls. So I opted for a Charles Jamesian ball gown." The result was a severe bodice, fitted and boned, with sculptural panels of fabric that fly around the shoulders, echoing their shape, and a skirt with a train that could be drawn up asymmetrically, for dancing. "Only the bride's grandmother was on to what I was doing," Long says. "At one point, she said to the bride, 'You know, dear, it looks to me for all the world like a *ball* gown.' The family felt, 'Isn't this a little too *mature*?' There is a general sense that wedding gowns should be not naïve but present-day-denying, as if your wedding were going to take place in a magical fairy-tale dreamland. But I thought that the husband should see her as the beautiful woman she is now. At the wedding, she *was* attractive, and it made everyone a little nervous. Because she was in control—the bride was in control. Another reason I didn't want to do the whole froufrou thing is that I didn't want the groom to be underdressed. What you find today is the bride all done up and the rest of the party rather casual. I wish people dressed up more, but I understand why they don't, because unless the whole crowd is going to play the game it's hard to get people into it." Long took the groom shopping for a navy-blue two-piece suit: "Classic, simple, you fill in the third word."

Given the options for men, a suit is probably in better taste than something more formal. In England, chances are that the groom who wears a morning coat already owns it, and that the male guests who own morning coats will turn up wearing theirs. But in America the groom who wears a morning coat has hired it for the occasion, and the guests wear suits, and this serves only to distance the stars of the show from their audience.

John Loring, the design director of Tiffany & Company, says that Americans, lacking the pageantry of court life which prevailed in Europe, have had to invent their own ceremony—something democratic, built around an event that could serve as a common denominator. And so the American imagination came to be focussed on the wedding, as a sort of Everywoman's coronation. The danger in this, of course, is that the bride and groom, and even their parents, may approach the event as if it were a state occasion.

Isaac Mizrahi, who has designed wedding gowns for friends and private customers, as well as two dresses this season for Bergdorf Goodman, says, "Tulle and seed pearls are the absolute antithesis of what a bride should be. She has to be the symbol of purity, which gets lost in all that froufrou. You achieve purity mostly by sculpting out of the most beautiful satin. When you make a wedding dress out of satin, it has to be satin that the Pope would wear."

Though Pat Kerr's dresses are generally more ornate than Mizrahi's, Kerr agrees with him in principle. "In most of my designs," she says, "the complexity comes from the lace, which lies flat. I almost never do a ruffle."

The bride who is overdressed may be unconditionally excused, because her excess is interpreted as a measure of how much she's in love. But the bride in a simple dress shifts the focus from herself to the occasion; there is something winning about a woman who turns her back on the chance to be queen for a day, and who knows the difference between her wedding's private significance, which may or may not be the fulfillment of some childhood dream, and its significance for the guests, who were never privy to the bride's childhood dream in the first place and who would probably rather be out playing golf.

ASKED to recall the bridal gowns that are among the greatest of the genre, de la Renta cited the last dress Balenciaga designed—a white satin princess dress, austere in its lines, embroidered with ropes of pearls—for Franco's granddaughter, when she married the future Duke of Cádiz, in 1972. Herrera, too, thought of wedding gowns by Balenciaga—"for the purity of the line." More recently, the most memorable bridal gowns have been those by Yves Saint Laurent: the Shakespearean bride (fall, 1980), covered in red-and-gold damask and bro-

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cade, and the black velvet and pale-gray satin Goya bride from the Picasso collection (fall, 1980), escorted by two harlequins. The white Ottoman-and-satin patchwork dress Saint Laurent designed for the Duchess of Orléans, in 1969, is staggeringly elegant and faintly homey.

Azzedine Alaïa recalls the dress Worth made in 1904 not for the bride but for her mother, the Comtesse Greffulhe: a gold brocade-and-tulle dress, jewelled and embroidered, with a train edged in sable—a dress that at the time was more resplendent than any queen's. "*C'était la limite*," Alaïa says. It's not the dress he admires so much as the fact that the mother's entrance at the church stole the show.

Mizrahi's favorite gown is Maria's in the movie version of "The Sound of Music," with its enormous skirt and long train.

I asked de la Renta what relation a wedding dress should have to what is going on in fashion. "Absolutely none," he said. Alaïa disagreed. "A bridal gown must correspond to its time," he said. "What's the point in doing something old?" When Gale Elliott got married, Alaïa made her a long white stretch bustier dress; the groom wore a black suit by Comme des Garçons.

Most of the women who opt for a so-called traditional wedding dress, I suppose, are hoping—consciously or not—to steer clear of fashion, to buy a dress that won't ever look dated or ridiculous, in retrospect. The sentiments attached to a wedding are meant to be eternal, and therefore, we think, the dress should be eternal, too. The trouble is, this stepping outside time almost never works, so that twenty years down the road the dress we now consider traditional looks not like something timeless but like 1989's idea of a traditional dress.

De la Renta says that white is not reserved for virgins. Pat Kerr likes to work in off-whites, candlelight, champagne, and even a blush pink, which she overlays with écru lace—she calls this a wonderful color for "the girl who married at eighteen and divorced at eighteen and a half, and now she's thirty-two, she has a career, and she wants a train and a headpiece and a gorgeous gown, because in her mind this is the real wedding."

The choice of colors for the last wedding dress Long designed was between white and oyster: the bride wanted oyster, he says, but "I just kept holding up this white. I would go out the door and come back in again, and the gasp value was so much higher on the white that in the end that was what we used—for reasons of pure theatrics."

Mizrahi favors white; he says that he finds it "spiritual." Now that black has become so commonplace, for both day and evening, white looks somehow transcendent. The effect of white is heightened by black. "It's like in this new production of 'Swan Lake' at American Ballet Theatre," Mizrahi says. "Take away the black swan, and the white swan doesn't stand for anything. It's the contrast that gives the symbol its meaning." If black no longer signifies mourning, it still connotes absence, evil, doubt, darkness, misery, the void, and white is our way of saying no to black.

The critic and translator Wallace Fowlie, the author of "Love in Literature," contends that in literature men are ennobled by war and conflict, and women are ennobled by love. I'm not wild about the implications of this, but I see that what he says has historically been true, and that the male counterpart of the bride—jubilant, triumphant, in her glory, at her peak—has been not the groom but the conquering hero leading his army home from some fresh campaign. For centuries, the story has been that men are fulfilled in their relationship to God and the world, and women fulfilled in their relationship to men. Both literature and life are, of course, infinitely more complicated than this. But the desire to create something absolute in a world where nothing is certain seems to me perfectly human, and if the attempt isn't always successful the symbol, still laden with hope, is no less powerful. If weddings reflected all the ambiguities of married life, the bride would wear gray.

—HOLLY BRUBACH

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TURMOIL IN FAIRFIELD COUNTY

[*From the Redding* (*Conn.*) *Pilot*]

CLARIFICATION

Resident Claudia Downey objected to an article in last week's Pilot in which Lester Peterson described himself as a Deacon Abbott Lane South resident. Mrs. Downey wishes to point out that the town voting list names Mr. Peterson as a Lonetown Road resident. Mr. Peterson could not be reached, but the phone book lists him as a resident of Mohawk Hill Road.

THE THEATRE

Fat King

ALFRED JARRY'S disreputable satire "Ubu Roi" has opened, under the title "Ubu," at the Mitzi E. Newhouse, where it is done with a deadly, misguided facetiousness, which all but destroys it. The play, which was originally produced in Paris in 1896, tells the story of the gross, repulsive Père Ubu, who at the instigation of his equally repulsive wife, Mère Ubu, a sort of portly Lady Macbeth, decides to acquire the throne of Poland and, by murdering everyone who stands in the way, including, of course, the king and royal family, accomplishes the mission but at a heavy cost. At last, on the run, he escapes by boat and returns to Paris. But the story is not the thing; what makes the play is the scenes along the way, which with considerable ingenuity express Jarry's disgust with the greedy, dim-witted human race. We see Ubu and his cronies, near the beginning, gorging on (and disgorging) the food at a large banquet table; we hear about his theory of "pataphysics," a mixture of reason and unreason, which is the guide to his behavior; we see one Polish nobleman after another fed into a disembraining machine and his money confiscated.

The action is broad and grotesque (and original), but as performed here it is not vulgar or shocking or funny. When "Ubu Roi" first opened, it caused riots, and ran for only two performances. At the preview I saw, nobody rioted; a few people left, and there was some laughter, but it was of the silly, indulgent sort usually reserved for family projects. The performance has a kind of campy incompetence, breaking faith with the playwright, so that his targets are shouldered aside, while the actors seem to be mocking the play itself. There are a couple of exceptions. K. Todd Freeman enacts several Slavic roles with the proper seriousness, and it is always a pleasure to see Christopher Durang (who appeared in some of the early performances as Ubu's conscience), in whatever guise. "Ubu Roi" is hardly sacred writ, but it is a seminal work, a begetter of surrealism and the theatre of the absurd. No matter how you feel about surrealism and the absurd (I could live without both), they should be wild and they should be fun. The current production is a slipshod bore.

Douglas Stein's striking setting, as lighted by Stephen Strawbridge, looks like a large bathroom with a drain in the middle. The costumes were designed by Susan Hilferty; Greg Cohen's score, which sounds like carnival music slightly askew, sets exactly the right tone. The translation, adapted from a literal version by Jacqueline de la Chaume, is by Larry Sloan and Doug Wright. By the way, along with a program, each member of the audience is given a comic-book biography of Jarry, written by Paul Corio. It's helpful, informative, and more entertaining than anything on the stage.

—EDITH OLIVER

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FOUR APPALOOSAS

First the glycerin, green transparency of rain,
the stations of the air shifting around them, in columns,
like the trees, next to which they stand in a kind
of pattern, even the one at the fence watching the traffic,
all of them stained like stone, mud and gray and pearl,
backs to the wind. Then the gulls coming down,
like lights, out of a cloud . . . ice white.
The sea is yoked but huge against the ground, tidal
in its weather, only miles from here. You feel its weight
in the shapes of things, antipodal, bent-nail,
the scarring of the branches black and lateral,
the rain suddenly visible at angles mixed with snow.
Now the shorebirds are the knocked-off hats of the horses . . .
Now the snow sticking white to the windshield.

—STANLEY PLUMLY

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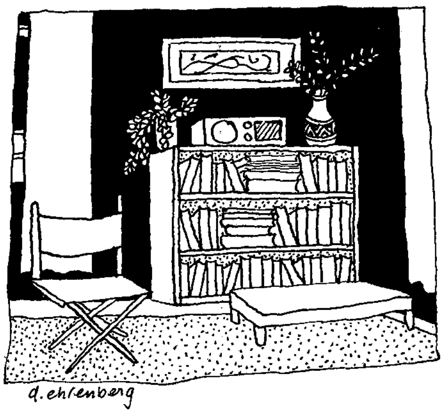
BOOKS

Michel Tournier

AT around the time, in the sixties, when the intellectual innovations of Roland Barthes and Claude Lévi-Strauss and Fernand Braudel began to achieve international influence, French fiction ceased to export well. Alain Robbe-Grillet and his *nouveau roman* suddenly seemed just another idea, and a superficial one at that, producing novels as depthless as movies but on a much smaller screen; simultaneously, it began to appear that Françoise Sagan was not quite another Colette. Though the French literary industry has kept humming away, pinning prizes on itself and generating fodder for the wildly popular book-chat show “Apostrophes,” the reverberations carry but feebly across the Atlantic. Perhaps, having so heavily imported the ideas of Braudel and Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, we have no spare change for the light goods of fiction. It is symptomatic of a depressed market, in any case, that Michel Tournier, arguably France’s foremost living novelist (“France has produced no novelist of real importance in twenty years, except Michel Tournier,” quoth Raymond Sokolov in the *Wall Street Journal*), has come to be published so marginally here. The English version of his autobiography, “The Wind Spirit,” has been brought out by Boston’s little Unitarian publishing house, Beacon Press (translated from the French by Arthur Goldhammer; $19.95), and Grove Press has performed a very skittish dance with Alan Sheridan’s English translation of a 1983 novella, “Gilles & Jeanne,” which appeared in England in 1987: Grove sent bound galleys to prospective American reviewers, then cancelled publication, on the ground that the translation was riddled with errors, and now announces that a revised text will be issued in 1990. *Quelle tournure!*

“THE WIND SPIRIT,” prettily printed, and jacketed with a nineteenth-century German painting of a little shepherd lying on a dune stargazing, would be a good book for the stranger to Tournier to start with. In six lively, digressive, aphoristic chapters, the author presents his life mostly in terms of his opinions and inspirations; only in the first chapter, which sketches his origins and childhood, do biographical facts dominate. This chapter is titled “Born Under a Lucky Star,” Mr. Goldhammer’s rendition of “L’Enfant Coiffé”; he explains that *coiffé* means to be born with a caul, a piece of luck equivalent to being born with a silver spoon in one’s mouth, and that the word ties into the epigraph, by Saint-John Perse, which runs, “When you stop grooming me / I’ll stop hating you.” Throughout, the translator has added explanatory footnotes to the footnotes provided by Tournier, intensifying the somewhat stern pedagogic atmosphere of “The Wind Spirit.” It appeared in France in 1977, when Tournier was fifty-three years old. The curious but widespread autobiographical impulse in men still enjoying middle age possibly stems from a desire to set the record straight before senility muddles it, and a hope of lightening the ballast for the homeward leg of life’s voyage.

Tournier was born in 1924 in Paris, in the comfortable upper reaches of the bourgeoisie. His father was “the founder and director of something called the BIEM,” the Bureau International des Éditions Musico-Mécaniques, which “orchestrated the complexities of rights and contracts pertaining to recorded music sold outside the right-holder’s country of origin.” The business was lucrative and complex, involving branches in many countries and feeding with many spare records a small boy’s phonograph. Well-off, immersed in music, and further blessed with “an old-fashioned apothecary” for a grandfather, in the friendly village of Bligny-sur-Ouche, the little boy gathered a surprisingly grim impression of life:



> Stripped from his mother’s womb like a fox cub from its lair, the child finds tenuous and temporary shelter in his mother’s arms, nourished by capricious and parsimonious breasts. Subsequently he must abandon this refuge as well, after which he will be allowed only a few minutes a day in that last haven, his mother’s bed, a vast ship, white and shadowy, in which for the briefest of intervals his body again clings to the body from which it sprang. Then comes the final expulsion. Grown “too big,” the child can no longer “decently” lie in its parents’ bed. Thereupon begins a long trek across a vast and terrifying desert.

At the age of four, Michel was “an extremely nervous child, subject to convulsions, hypersensitive, and perpetually ill.” One morning, two white-coated strangers burst into his room and pulled out his tonsils, a bloody deed he has never forgiven: “During the last war prepubescent girls were raped by soldiers. I maintain that they were less traumatized than I was by having my throat slit at the age of four.” The doctor became “the only man in the world whom I have ever hated without reservation, because he did me incalculable harm, having branded my heart at the most tender age with an incurable distrust of my fellow human beings, even those nearest and dearest to me.” By the age of six, Michel had become “a child with an enormous head upon a sparrowlike body, and I neither slept nor ate.” Nor was his physical frailty made up in mental brilliance: “I was an execrable student, and rarely did I finish a school year in the same institution in which I began . . . I read little and late.” And yet at some point in his resisted education he took a shine to the rarefied “Monadology” of Leibniz and to Anselm’s ontological proof of God’s existence: “From earliest childhood I had a yen for the constructs of the mind, for subtle proofs, for a rare and technical vocabulary.”

The other unusual yen in Tournier’s developing mind was his *Germanistik*, a fascination with German culture inherited from both parents: "My father and mother met at the Sorbonne when he was studying for a doctorate in German and she for a master's." His father's qualifying exam had been scheduled for August, 1914, and he went to war against the Germans instead, incurring serious facial wounds. But Tournier's mother—whose uncle, a priest, taught German—"kept faith with her family tradition, and we grew up with one foot in Germany." As a child, Tournier went on Black Forest vacations with his family. As an adolescent, he improved his German while living with twenty-two German soldiers in his parents' occupied house in Saint-Germain—"I will never forget the smell of the Wehrmacht, a compound of tobacco and boot polish. For me this was the fragrance of happiness." As a young postgraduate student, he studied for four years (1946-50) at the University of Tübingen, in the French Occupied Zone of what is now West Germany. At the age of twenty, he translated Erich Maria Remarque's novel "All Quiet on the Western Front," and did not scruple to improve passages of it. Remarque, meeting him, said, "This is the first time that I have been able to converse in my own language with any of my translators. The others . . . spoke German as though it were a dead language, like Latin or Greek." Tournier's enthusiasm for things German is, of course, the animating passion behind his best-known novel, "The Ogre" (1970), which tells the tale of a French automobile mechanic who finds fulfillment and doom as a German prisoner of war in East Prussia. In his own persona Tournier can seem an alarmingly fervid Germanophile:

> Dream a little: had there been no Nazi madness, no war and no defeat, Germany and its outposts in Vienna, Zurich, and Prague would have formed an economic and cultural unit comparable in power and influence to France in the seventeenth or England in the nineteenth century. With the barbarians of the East and West held at bay, the world would have continued to be European, and it would have been German. . . . Because the Americans had won the war, it was their language that one had to speak to become a hotel porter or an airline pilot. But we were not really cheated, for the twentieth century was still built upon a German foundation, or at any rate upon works written in the German language. . . . There are few places where one can scratch the earth without coming upon the soil of old Germany. . . . "Old Germany, mother of us all!"

One could almost resent being called a barbarian while the perpetrators of Buchenwald are so lovingly extolled.

Battle of Nerves

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Tournier's chapter on "The Ogre" is the second and longest, and in the four remaining chapters he discusses his early professional years as translator and radio broadcaster; his growing determination to write apparently naturalistic stories that "would secretly be set in motion by ontology and logic"; his belief that humor and celebration are essential to literature; his first published novel, "Friday" (1967), "into which I hoped to pour the essence of what I had learned while employed at the Musée de l'Homme, especially under the tutelage of Claude Lévi-Strauss"; his novel "Les Météores" (1975; translated into English as "Gemini"), a tangled tale "inspired by a fascination with the super-flesh of twins" and crowned by the formula "twinship untwinned = ubiquity"; and the topic of wisdom itself. These connected autobiographical essays are brilliant and possibly wise, though a certain dark and teasingly perverse streak beclouds the even illumination we expect from wisdom. We cannot ignore the saturnine personality projecting itself in such epithets as "that whining female monster, the crowd," such epigrams as "ontology when tossed into the crucible of fiction undergoes a partial metamorphosis into scatology," and such assertions as the one that circumcision keratinizes the glans and makes fellatio "so laborious that it loses all its charm."

Like Pangloss and Candide, Tournier ends up cultivating his garden, which he describes in grand terms:

> Every summer morning, as I toast my bread and steep my tea by an open window through which I can smell the grass and hear the wind in the linden branches, I suddenly become aware that time has been compressed, that space has shrunk to those few square feet enclosed by a stone wall, and that a single living thing—my garden—flourishes in the exorbitant immobility of the absolute. . . . The present lingers on eternally in a divine improvidence and amnesia.

There is no chasing all the hares that Tournier's energetic mind starts during the survey of his personal garden. His theories have a glittering laciness alongside which any actual creative production must look coarsely woven. He works slowly, he tells us, devoting four or more years to a book, and lets the work in progress send him upon mysterious errands of research. "The writer who labors on a book for

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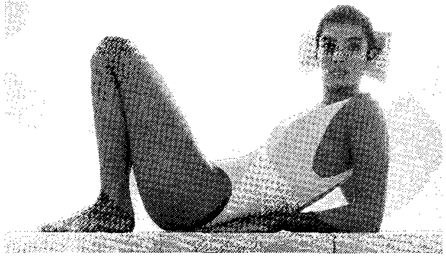

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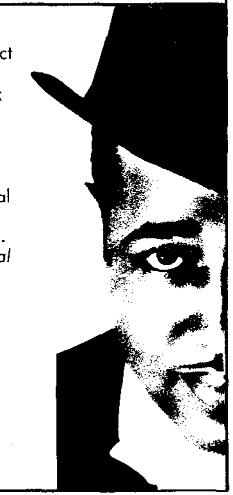

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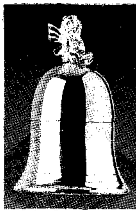

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four years becomes that book and assimilates all its alien elements, which add up to a structure far more impressive, vast, complex, and learned than their author. . . . The work produces itself and the author is only its byproduct." The author and his work exist within a matrix of large and ancient forces: "Man is nothing but a mythical animal. He becomes man—he acquires a human being's sexuality and heart and imagination—only by virtue of the murmur of stories and kaleidoscope of images that surround him in the cradle and accompany him all the way to the grave. . . . That being the case, it becomes easy to describe the social—one might even say biological—function of the creative artist. The artist's ambition is to add to or at any rate modify the 'murmur' of myth that surrounds the child, the pool of images in which his contemporaries move—in short, the oxygen of the soul."

AFTER formulations so spacious and humane, the actual work risks seeming minor. A glance at Tournier's recent fiction does suggest the limits of determined mythicization, of ontology and logic as prime aesthetic movers. "Gilles & Jeanne" sets itself to construct a connection between the two apparently diverse aspects of Gilles de Rais's fame: as the devoted comrade-in-arms and royally appointed protector of the saintly Joan of Arc, and as the Black Mass orgiast and sodomizing slaughterer of children whom legend has transmuted into Bluebeard, slaughterer of wives. A premise of structuralist thought is that opposites (black-white, good-bad, up-down) share the identity of the conceptual structure that holds them and hence are basically aspects of the same thing. It is, for the adroit and learned Tournier, a matter of little more than a hundred pages to demonstrate that Gilles, possessed by the vision of simple goodness embodied in Joan and revolted by her body's horrible end at the stake in Rouen, logically seeks her and the absolute in satanism. As Joan, burning at the stake for witchcraft, cries out "*Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!*," so Gilles, burning for sorcery nine years later, calls out, "Jeanne! Jeanne! Jeanne!"

This stylized equation—Jeanne/Jesus = Gilles/Jeanne—forms the bare bones of the novel. What is its meat? The era and its cosmology offer many convenient ambiguities: Joan's voices might be angels or devils, Satan is "the image of God," a town square contains "a statue that was in such a sorry state that it would have been difficult to tell whether it was a Virgin or a Venus," alchemical experiments are conducted on "the fundamental ambiguity of fire, which is both life and death, purity and passion, sanctity and damnation." The book's alchemist, the Tuscan abbé Francesco Prelati (a historical figure, de Rais's assistant in his diabolical dablings), construes his master's psychology in terms of "inversions." Prelati testifies to the court that a "malign inversion" occurred when Joan was captured and condemned, and then a satanist antidote: "To drive the Sire de Rais to the blackest edge of wickedness, then, by the igneous operation, to subject him to a benign inversion, like the one that transmutes ignoble lead into gold. He was becoming a saint of life!" Prelati's fancy thinking and talking rather sap Gilles and Jeanne's tale of human interest. The little novel becomes, atrocious as the facts behind it are, bloodless, with nothing in its arch paradoxes as visceral and memorable as Lucifer's blunt pentameters in "Paradise Lost":

> So farewell hope, and with hope farewell
>   fear,
> Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
> Evil be thou my Good.

Along with Milton's epic of elected sin, the English language holds a play, Shaw's "Saint Joan," that juggles ideas at the fifteenth-century crossroads with an impudent facility that makes Tournier seem relatively hard-breathing. Shaw's drama includes, amid its abundance of historical sidelights, a small part for Gilles de Rais, whom he calls Bluebeard and decorates to suit the name. He characterizes him thus: "*Gilles de Rais, a young man of 25, very smart and self-possessed, and sporting the extravagance of a little curled beard dyed blue at a clean-shaven court, comes in. He is determined to make himself agreeable, but lacks natural joyousness, and is not really pleasant.*" The mild suggestion, regarding this legendary sadist, that he lacked "natural joyousness" brings us closer to the mass murderer than Tournier's schematic religious pathology. But as a cultural critic the French author can be dazzling. Here, for instance, is what perspective in drawing and painting meant to a French priest travelling for the first time in Italy:

It seemed to him that the flat, edifying, worthy image of his pious childhood was suddenly exploding under the impetus of some magic force, was being undermined, distorted, thrown beyond its own limits, as if possessed by some evil spirit. When he stood in front of certain frescoes or pored over certain engravings, he thought he could see opening up in front of his eyes a vertiginous depth that was sucking him in, an imaginary abyss into which he felt a terrifying temptation to dive, headfirst.

OUR modern abyss, as experienced by another unfortified sensibility, is the subject of Tournier's "The Golden Droplet" (translated from the French by Barbara Wright; Doubleday; $16.95). Published in France two years later than "Gilles & Jeanne," it tells of Idris, a fifteen-year-old Berber dwelling in the Algerian oasis of Tabelbala, who is one day suddenly photographed by a scantily dressed blonde who leaps out of a desert-cruising Land Rover. In pursuit of the photograph, Idris travels to Paris. If psychological structuralism shaped "Gilles & Jeanne," semiology is the name of the game here. On all sides Idris is confronted by images and signs—which are not, it develops, the same thing. Images—"the opium of the Occident"—bind us to the world, and signs release us from it:

> These Moslem adolescents, submerged in the big occidental city, were subjected to all the assaults of the effigy, the idol, and the figure. Three words to designate the same servitude. The effigy is a door bolt, the idol a prison, the figure a lock. Only one key can remove these chains: the sign. . . . The sign is spirit, the image is matter. Calligraphy is the algebra of the soul craved by the most spiritualized organ of the body, its right hand. It is the celebration of the invisible by the visible. The arabesque manifests the presence of the desert in the mosque. Through the arabesque, the infinite is deployed in the finite. For the desert is pure space, freed from the vicissitudes of time. It is God without man.

Calligraphy lessons form the happy ending of "The Golden Droplet": the child of the desert, lost in the evil land of images, of cinema and advertising and hair dyed blond, reclaims his semiotic heritage of pure emptiness. A complicated fable of the "Blond Queen," whereby a bewitching human portrait is reduced to a salutary pattern of calligraphed quotations, cinches the moral, which would seem to be that words are better than things.

"The Golden Droplet" has a denser texture than "Gilles & Jeanne": the oasis, the trip north through progressively larger and more Westernized cities to Oran, the boat trip to Marseilles, the African quarter of Marseilles, and then the Maghrebi worker environment in Paris are all conscientiously presented. So conscientiously, indeed, that each chapter feels like a discrete essay. In a postscript the author acknowledges his many sources, from Dominique Champault's study "Tabelbala"—"a model of what the ethnological monograph should be"—to Hassan Massoudy, the author of "Calligraphie Arabe Vivante" and a "master calligrapher . . . who enabled me to approach a traditional art whose beauty is indistinguishable from truth and wisdom." It is edifying and pleasing, of course, to be guided by Tournier from one oasis of research to the next, and to view, on our tour, sights that range from a traditional Berber wedding, complete with "a troupe of dancers and musicians from the High Atlas Mountains," to the grisly, exotic insides of a Parisian sex shop, peepshow, pinball palace, mannequin factory, and abattoir. As so often on an educational tour, though, the sights pile up but do not accumulate into an adventure. Idris, our Berber Candide, remains innocent and blank throughout—himself a mere sign, with a significance special to France, where a long involvement with North Africa and a large immigrant population of North Africans form a hot, recurrent issue. Like William Styron's "Confessions of Nat Turner," Tournier's book is a bold attempt to empathize with an underclass, but it is carried out (unlike Styron's) behind an impervious screen of intellectual play.

There are, in the stretches of description and sociology, few events in the sense of happenings that invite suspense and pose an outcome that can grieve or gratify us—few moments when the narrative acquires a mind of its own. In one of them, Idris's nomad friend Ibrahim abruptly falls into an old well, which collapses and buries him alive: this sudden nonacademic development startles us, and breaks Idris's last emotional link with his desert life. In another, Idris, having fallen under the spell of the filmmaking magus Achille Mage, is stuck with a camel used in a television commercial for a beverage called Palm Grove, and wanders Paris with the signal creature. In the fashionable districts, people pretend not to see him; only the lower

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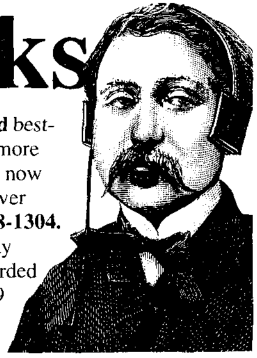
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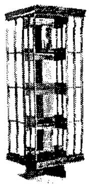
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classes allow themselves to express curiosity—"Once again, as the tissue of social relationships became less compact, the camel had become visible." The animal finally, to the reader's considerable relief, finds a haven in the zoo, a collection of living emblems, where it is greeted by a female of its species ("Their morose, disdainful heads met very high up in the sky, and their big, pendulous lips touched") and is outfitted for children's rides by "adolescents dressed as Turks." In general, however, even mild emotional involvement is forestalled by the bristle of forked signifiers, and Tournier's pageant of incidents seems not so much a novel as a cunningly wrought image of one—calligraphy aping portraiture aping appearances.

THESE books made out of other books—are they what the future holds? To "read up" on an area of geography or history and then be clever and cool about it—is this all the postmodern novelist can do? Italo Calvino managed to include something of himself in the intricate package, a self that in his last novel, "Mr. Palomar," became poignant, almost pleading. But of Michel Tournier, or of Patrick Süskind, the author of the much admired "Perfume," or of Julian Barnes, the concocter of such elegancies as "Flaubert's Parrot" and "Staring at the Sun," we can guess a little but have, as it were, nothing. Joyce and Mann did their research also, but left a palpable weight of personal impulse if not confession in their constructions, whether as elaborate as "Finnegans Wake" or as limpid and light as "Royal Highness." Their fictions have a presence and voice that are humbly human; their books give off the warmth of a proximate body. To be fair, Tournier did show warmth in such earlier novels as "Friday," his anti-colonialist gloss on the Robinson Crusoe story, and "The Ogre," generally considered his masterpiece and hailed in these pages by L. E. Sissman, in 1972, as "quite simply, a great novel." "The Ogre" is a thick outpouring of arcane facts and involved feelings, a complex but sensual fable of loneliness and desire and perception which seems, as Roland Barthes said of classic literature, "replete"—a book saturated in its own completely fulfilled tendencies. Like "Gilles & Jeanne," it is concerned with inversion and pedophilia; like "The Golden Droplet," it equates purity with nothingness and points out that "the human soul is made of paper." Unlike both these flimsy fictions, it compels interest and arouses dread and pity. But how much of its engaging warmth, I wonder, derives from the entwinement of its intricate parable (a gloss of Goethe's poem "The Erl-King") with its fascinating facts about the Second World War? This war, at least for Europeans and North Americans, has become the century's central myth, a vast imaging of a primal time when good and evil contended for the planet, a tale of Troy whose angles are infinite and whose central figures never fail to amaze us with their size, their theatricality, their sweep. Göring's sybaritic hunting lodge in "The Ogre," and the four hundred child-warriors martyred to Hitler's fanaticism, and the East Prussian mud that the Ogre treads belong to an epic we never weary of hearing. Tournier's peculiarly intense mental inhabitation of both France and Germany enabled his matter, for once, to make an equal contest with his mind. The trouble with the French love of pure thought is that thought must operate upon *something*—the world as it impurely exists, an apparently ill-thought-out congeries of contradictory indications and arbitrary facts. The novelist must be thoughtless, to some degree, in submitting to the world's facts: he must be naïve enough, as it were, to let the facts flow through him and unreflectingly quicken recognition and emotion in his readers. And this the French find difficult to do.

—JOHN UPDIKE

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OUR DISGRUNTLED CRITICS

[*From a music review by Martin Litvin in the Galesburg* (*Ill.*) *Post*]

The featured composition on the last half of the concert was Tschaikowsky's Fifth Symphony, a melodic, roiling, moiling epic in several movements which was done with great brio and fierce sweep, so that with the fine acoustics in the Orpheum, the music drove all before it and left everyone in the auditorium in the state of happy, quivering jelly and sent people homeward almost stupefied by the drama and perspiration of brilliant music played to a fare-thee-well.

For a selected guest list, the Admiral Corporation gave a private reception in the Kensington Hotel at which the beautiful Miss Chase was introduced to a host of admirers. (Not invited were the people who write reviews in The Galesburg Post for the symphony orchestra or do programs about the group on cable television.)

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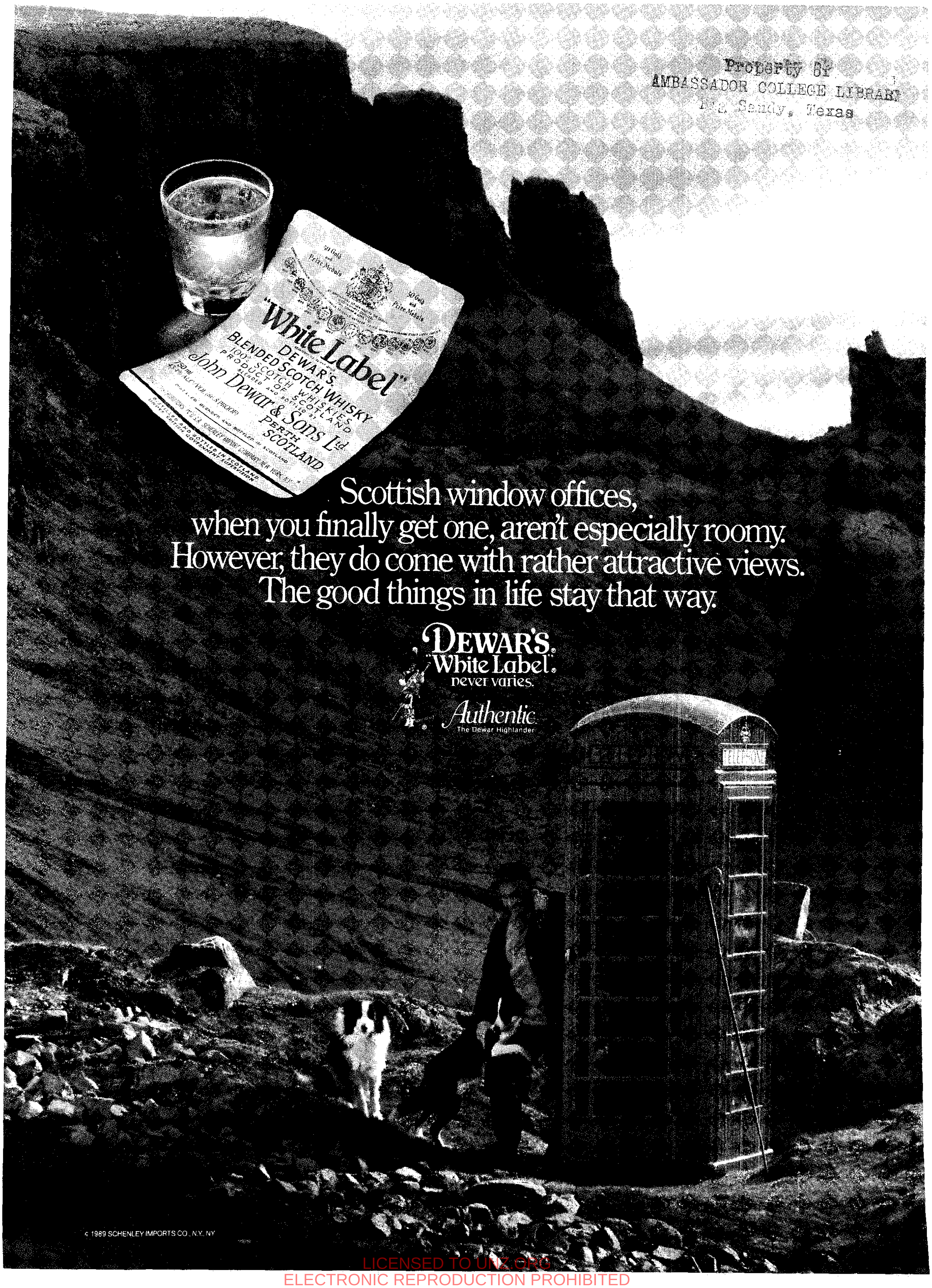
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